

LYME—AND  
OUR FAMILY

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GENEALOGY COLLECTION



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Emily Whitney

from

Katherine Sedgwick

October 21<sup>st</sup> 1951





















“LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD”  
Josephine Lord Noyes (Ludington)  
Painted by her Mother  
Phoebe Griffin Noyes



<sup>Conn.</sup>  
LYME—AND OUR FAMILY

BY  
KATHARINE LUDINGTON



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## FOREWORD

Dear Nephews and Nieces:

This book was done for you and for the other descendants of Daniel Rogers and Phoebe Griffin Noyes, and much affection has gone into it; affection that looked back and affection that looks forward.

I have had one of the pleasantest times of my life writing it, for when I was not surrounded with the faces and voices of those members of our family who have gone before us, I could shut my eyes and bring up your faces; you, into whose making all these lives have gone and toward whom all our hopes are turned.

I have not tried to go back very far and have set down only what has come to me through my own experience, by word of mouth or from the old letters. I heard much of Great Grandmother Lord. I remember Grandmother and Grandfather Noyes and some of the great aunts, and of course the people of later years are still a vivid memory.

They gave, each generation to the next, the best that they knew and the more you read and know of them the more you will

see that their best was very good; sometimes, fine and exquisite. They were keenly and actively of their own day and generation but they built homes, raised families, served their town or state, with their eyes on the future.

They liked themselves and each other and were happily sure there was no family like our family and no place like Lyme. In one letter, written after a Thanksgiving visit at home, Uncle Dan says: "I confided to Julia (his sister) that I thought we were about as nice people as any we met with and she coolly replied that she had always known it."

If you could go back to visit them, I don't think they would seem alien to you. Their way of speaking, their dress, perhaps many of their ideas, might not be yours, or even mine, but they would not be strangers to you; you would know you were among "family." Grandmother Noyes would immediately bestir herself to make you comfortable with her limited resources, and to give you a good time; and I can assure you it would be a good time, for countless letters of her day bear testimony to that. She would be keenly interested in you and curious about you and she



would watch you a little shrewdly, for she saw people clearly and enjoyed the human scene. But she would be all prepared to like you and take you into her lively circle. She would set you at work doing something, "getting up" something; theatricals, poetry, botanizing, dancing, cross country runs on foot or on horseback. She would want to know everything you were doing and reading; she would expect you to be full of ambition, for her whole life was spent beating down the narrow barriers of place and circumstance and reaching out for something wider. And I venture to say that having visited her once, you would come again and would join the circle of her correspondents, since her cousins, her friends, her "beaux," her children and her grandchildren all laid that tribute at her feet.

How she would have enjoyed visiting all of you! She might rub her eyes at the miles to be travelled in reaching our various homes and at the infinitely more complex, full and easy setting of our lives. But that would not bother her; she would quickly adjust and I suspect would still be a dominant figure. And the scale of her values would remain undisturbed so that

she would still want to go back to the old house on the green and her evenings of reading aloud the latest book to Grandfather.

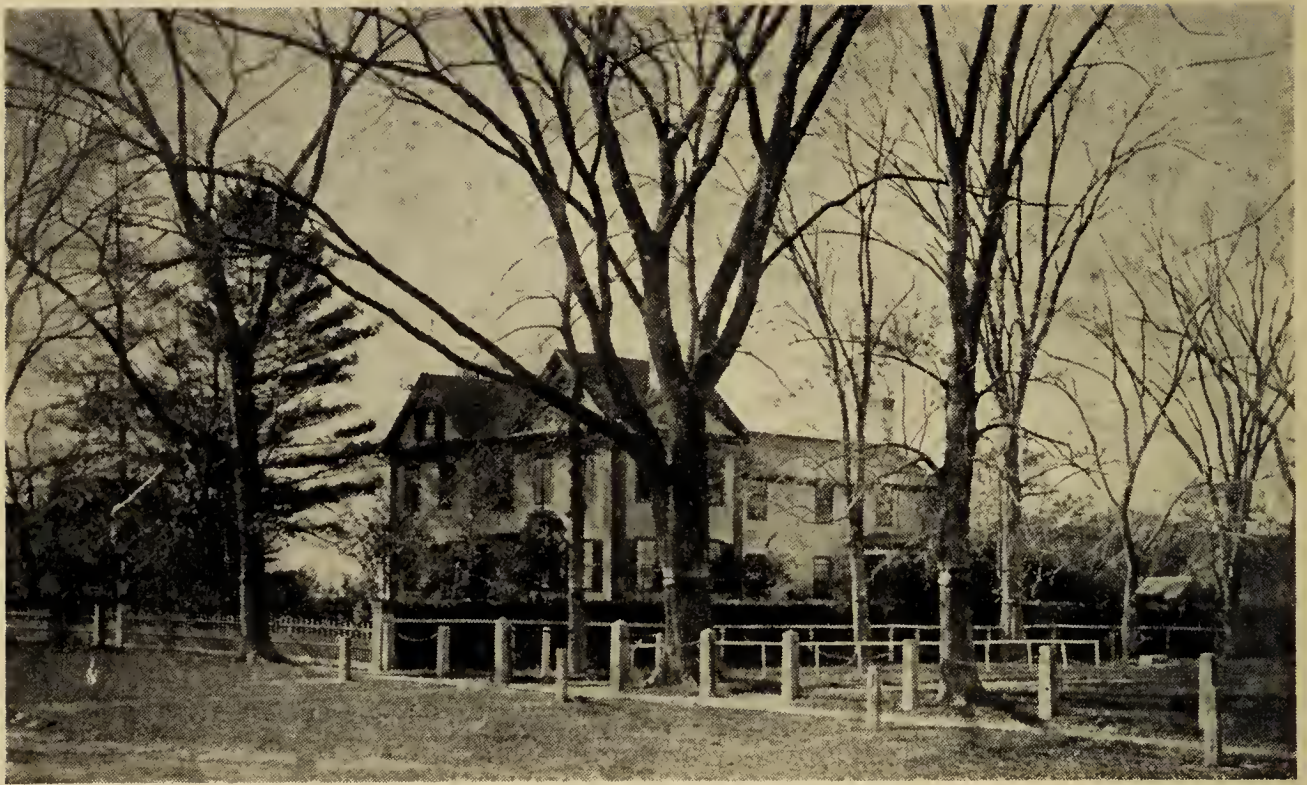
All of our forbears who lived in Lyme loved it deeply and sometimes poignantly. I have tried to catch something of the essence of this Lyme,—our corner of it, at least,—and pass it on to you. I hope you will all know it for yourselves before it changes too much.

It must change as all forms do. I am sure, however, that out of Lyme—and our family—some vital spark has been kindled to be passed on to you. It has gone to you in your blood, through your homes, through word of mouth and through family records; in some sense which we cannot grasp, through their struggles and their prayers.

Those of us who form a link between the past and the future of our family think of you with pride and comfort and confidence. A strong fibre is in you. A great deal of the pleasure of gathering together these rambling descriptions and memories has been due to my certainty that you were going to like them and to understand.







THE OLD HOUSE, SIDE VIEW



THE OLD HOUSE, FRONT VIEW



# LYME—AND OUR FAMILY

## I. THE OLD HOUSE

THE first things that I can remember about Lyme are associated with the "Sitting Room." It was comfortably shabby and beautifully clean. It had much horsehair and mahogany; matting on the floor and a big Turkey rug over it; an open fireplace with a deep chimney breast and cupboards in the sides, closed below and with glass doors above.

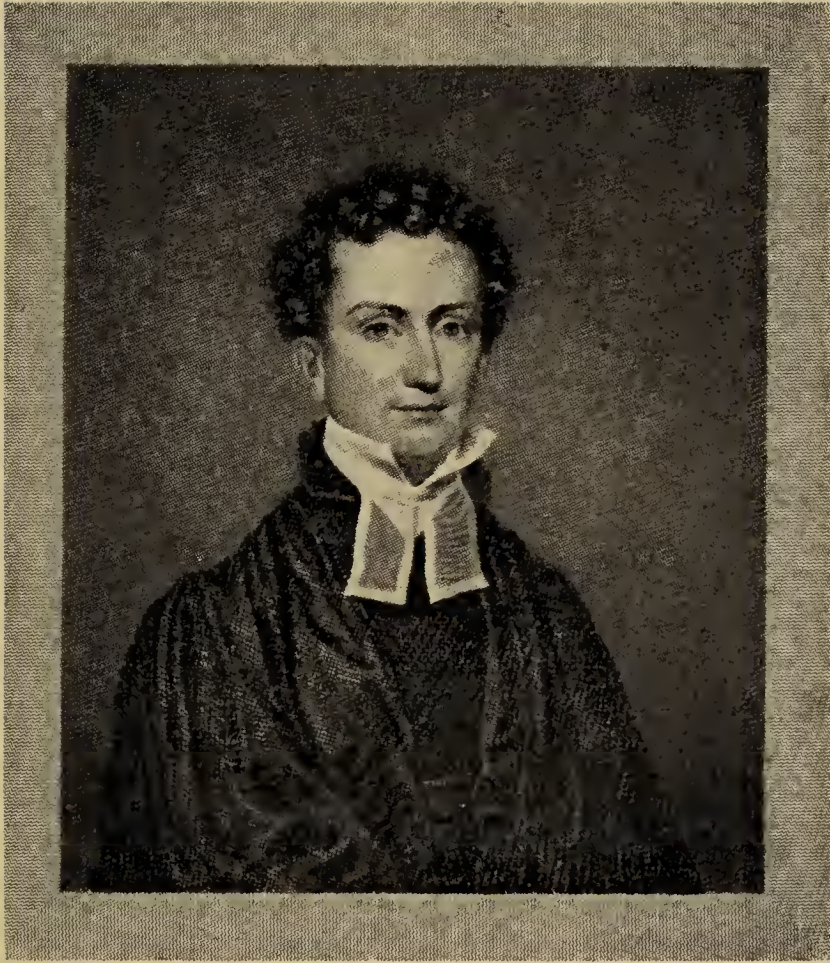
Below were bound volumes of Harper's Magazine with stories, which we read and re-read, fashion plates and "funny" pages. In the shelves above many of Grandmother's and Grandfather's "best" books were kept—books bound in rich leather or black with gold lettering. They represented a mixture of the "standards" — Scott, Byron, Shakespeare, Dickens, Macaulay, Pope, Addison with a dilution of Ladies' Manuals, "Keepsakes," "Garlands," Poems by Mrs. Sigourney (a Connecticut poetess and a friend of Grandmother's), "Fern Leaves from Fanny's Portfolio," by a person with the non-de-plume of

Fanny Fern, and many better poets far more worthy of a place in my memory.

Then there were the religious books. I can shut my eyes and run off the names: Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," Baxter's "Saints' Rest," Owen's "Commentaries on the Gospels," Muller's "Life of Trust," "Daniel, a Model for Young Men." There was a grim volume called "Living or Dead?" by Ryle, and another, "Griffin's Remains," whose title puzzled us but did not encourage exploration. Later, I found that "Griffin" was an Edmund Dorr Griffin, of brilliant promise, who entered the ministry and died young. All his youth and vigor and the love and hopes centering in him, buried under that dreary title!

There is a story that he was sent South on a trip with an elderly aunt, to protect her and manage her finances. He had a certain sum of money to account for and when there were gaps that his memory refused to fill, he would enter the deficit as "liquor for Aunt Caroline." We liked him better when we heard that. The Remains were his writings.

Unpromising as this little library of the grandparents sounds, it was the nourish-



EDMUND DORR GRIFFIN





ment of a real culture. Aunt Jane often told us how Great Grandmother and her daughters sat together in the evening, sewing by candle light, while one read aloud.

Samples of their beautiful handiwork are in the cupboard of the present sitting-room; exquisitely fine baby dresses, tucked half way up the long skirts and with lace made by themselves because they could not afford to buy and because the city shops were as remote as Paris is for us. Embroideries, with patterns designed by Grandmother, who had unquestionably a true artistic gift. Her miniatures and other paintings are a priceless inheritance for you all. The one of her mother, "P. Lord," is good work and would "stand up" in any collection. The modelling is delicately understood, the color restrained; the costume is the formal one of an elderly lady of the day.

The paintings in the sitting-room and other parts of the house were mostly done by Grandmother Noyes and her sisters. She studied miniature painting in New York from Mme. Vaillant, in the years when she visited her uncle, George Griffin, a distinguished lawyer of his time. When

she came back to Lyme, she taught her sisters and other pupils; many Lyme houses have water color paintings, done under her supervision and generally touched up by her at the last, so that the families of her scholars might be satisfied.

It is hard to resist the temptation to enumerate all the treasured possessions in the old house, acquired so slowly by careful purchase, gift, or invention and handicraft, and cared for so affectionately. Each one represented satisfaction for Grandmother's intellectual or aesthetic cravings and fed her eager love of beauty.

Many of the ornaments were made by her or by her sisters or daughters. When they could not buy, they had to create. Vases decorated by them, jewel-boxes with hand-painted scenes, samplers, of course, painted fans, hand-made lace are left to show us how fine their taste was.

The larger pictures are copies of Morland or Gainsborough landscapes, Hogarth genre scenes or highly romantic Italian and English compositions in which ruins, peasants and water are generally ingredients.

The old house had no luxuries, nor any modern conveniences until Grandmother's



children began to import them from New York—but it also had no vulgarities. It was quite innocent of architectural or decorative design and there was no color scheme in the rooms nor any single style, but it was eminently pleasant and it achieved color through the old furniture, books and pictures and the absence of anything that jarred. I remember it as filled with sunshine and fresh air; Grandmother and Mother were great believers in that. There was a smell that was a blend of old things, wood, horsehair, shut-up cupboards, herbs. This smell was unmistakably “Lyme” and it meets one still when the present house has been shut up for a time.

Grandmother had flowers and many flowering shrubs and there were beds either side of the path to the front door, with box bushes, bleeding heart, wygelia and other favorites. They didn’t cut many flowers; what time they could spare was given to indoor plants such as geranium and fuchsias. Tube roses were much prized and my memories of them are associated with Lyme parties and dark north “parlors” and funerals.

As I remember though, we always had

flowers on the dining-room table; Mother would have seen to that, even if Grandmother were too busy or too feeble in her last years.

The smell of flowers and outdoor things came in through the windows—lilacs, syringa blossoms, the smoke tree in the corner of the front yard, honeysuckle, hay. Sometimes there would be terrible hours when skunks visited us or fertilizer was being put on the fields. I remember one dark episode when Father ordered a car-load of bone-meal and it was carted from the station, load by load. The wind blew steadily from the south and for two days the Ludington family were execrated by the town.

To go back to the house through the front door, which had a small trellis covered with Virginia Creeper;—the hall had oilcloth on the floor and on the walls a glazed paper imitating grained oak paneling—very popular in its day. The stairs ran up on the right of the hall and there was a back door with amber and gray painted glass in the upper panels.

You could sit at the top of the stairs and see the front gate and I remember planting myself there, and weeping noisily as

the family started off for a picnic which I was too young to be included in. Charlie's heart was wrung and he ran back and pushed a quarter into my hand—a magnificent gift, for we were allowed very little spending money.

To the left of the door was the parlor, a somewhat stiff room with white glazed paper, patterned in delicate gold medallions and torches. "Callers" were received in this room, a curious perversion of courtesy, for its atmosphere was hardly genial; but informality was contrary to the ideas of that day. You honored your guests by dignity and ceremoniousness, as natural, I suppose, to our forefathers as our "naturalness" is to us.

Young people, of course, were brought for games into the sitting-room. The piano was in the parlor and we sang hymns around it Sunday evenings. A "what-not" stood in the corner, very fascinating to us because of various small treasures which we were allowed to handle "carefully" — shells, a painted glass box, a Leaning Tower of Pisa, an ivory and lace fan, brought back by an earlier generation from a trip abroad.

But the family life centered in the sit-



ting-room on the right. I haven't spoken yet of "Sleepy Hollow," the big upholstered arm chair which stands by the fireplace in the present house and has been known to harbor seven Ludingtons at once, nor the table between the two front windows (now in the middle of the room) straightened up a dozen times a day but always comfortably strewn with objects symbolic of our family life; Mamma's work basket with some embroidery or "scallop" always under way; Papa's reading glass (we called them "Mamma" and "Papa" but looked with smug disdain on those benighted children who said "Momma" and "Poppa"); Great-Aunt Jane's knitting and spectacles, the backgammon board, the "Bézique" packs which led a hard-worked and precarious existence, and were sometimes left out in the rain when your Cousin Sarah and I selected the "Rock" or the back step for greater seclusion. That old Bézique set is in the cupboard over the woodbox now.

The painting of your Aunt May which I did about 1888 and which hangs in the present sitting-room shows the old fireplace. She is posed in Sleepy Hollow, covered then in soft red cloth; she was so

small that her feet did not touch the floor.

Opening from the sitting-room, on the west, was the "downstairs bedroom," used by Grandfather and Grandmother, and later by Aunt Jane. This had heavy mahogany furniture—a high bureau, a double bed, a wardrobe with drawers below; mysterious drawers where Aunt Jane kept rock candy, which she doled out to us in tiny pieces when we were good—or when she thought we were, a very different matter. There were "pieces" in it kept from dresses of previous generations, a veritable history of the fabrics our ancestors used.

A long narrow passage led from the sitting-room to the dining-room at the back. Grandfather's crutches used to bump along it, getting fainter as he went. He spent much of his time on the sunny side porch under the grape arbor, which opened off the dining-room. It was mostly covered with Isabella grapes (one doesn't get them nowadays, but they were delicious). He sat on a green painted rush bottomed settee, which we later realized was a very fine piece, and which now, scraped and oiled, is in the library at 56 West 10th Street.

Back of the dining-room were the pantry, store closets, an entry and then, down three steps, the kitchen with its huge old fireplace blocked up for a modern range, although the brick oven to the left was still used for baking "Indian Loaf." This was a delectable improvement on Boston brown bread which no one seems able to make nowadays. We always had it, with fish balls, for Sunday breakfast.

Among my earliest recollections was quince marmalade, a solid brown loaf that cut into neat squares to spread on our bread. It was made from the pulp of the fruit when the juice had been drained off for jelly, and was not very sweet, so we could eat it in large quantities. For supper we had huckleberries—in their season—floating in big bowls of milk. Any Ludington of our generation could remember the stars the huckleberries made when they were half submerged and the game of searching for the last one, to put off the evil moment when you had to finish the milk.

Grandmother made delicious pound cake which was served with home-made wine to guests, particularly on Sundays, "between services."







THE NEW HOUSE



The pantry and store closets were interesting to us, of course, although I can remember being somewhat terrorized by black ants, which would come in after sugar, and required vigorous fighting with red pepper. The kitchen closet had a barrel of brown sugar, which we dipped into as many times a day as would escape the attention of the cook. When Grandmother was alive, she would let us make cookies, cutting out tiny circles with her thimble from her scraps of dough and baking them in the sun on the stones outside.

The ceilings in this old part of the house were very low and as the Ludington boys grew taller and taller (your Uncle Arthur was six feet two) they could kill mosquitoes on it with the flats of their hands. Aunt Jane, whose remarks could be predicted with practical certainty, would say "The Griffin men were always tall."

The older part of the house was over two hundred years old when it was pulled down in 1893 to make way for the present house. The front part, which Grandfather had added when he bought the place, was given to Cousin Evelyn Salisbury who had plans then for using it as a high school for Lyme.

It was a sad day when the pilgrimage of the old house began and it went tottering and bumping across the green and down the road to the present site, escorted by the watchful skill of the Piersons, father and sons, who were famous as movers and stone masons.

We wandered around in it, in the intervals when the Piersons and the oxen rested from their labors. I can remember still the desolate feeling of the rooms and the curious effect of seeing different views framed by the familiar windows.

The older part of the house had been originally a parsonage, although the earliest churches were on the Meeting House Hills. Jonathan Parsons, one of the best known of the Lyme ministers, entertained Whitfield, the English evangelist, when the latter came to this country and scandalized the more conservative of his congregation by having his visitor preach to an open air audience, standing on "The Rock" which is still at the back of our house. In our childhood there was a big apple tree close to it, and Uncle Charlie Noyes, when he was a boy, had built a rustic seat in the tree, reached by a bridge from the rock. No corner of the place had





"THE ROCK"



more associations for us and a terrible gap was left when the apple tree, seat and all, fell one stormy night.

The open air preaching, combined perhaps with other difficulties, led to a break with the congregation and Jonathan Parsons went to a church in Newburyport, Massachusetts, which he served until his death. Whitfield paid him a second visit in later years and died at his house, and the two coffins are in the crypt of the Newburyport Church—or were, when your Grandfather and I went there nearly forty years ago.

Jonathan Parsons, we were told, had an unsatisfactory son to whom the Lyme house went after he left—and partly to spite his father, the son ran a tavern in it. Uncle Charlie writes that in Revolutionary days it was a famous gathering place. The upper story of the older part was a dance hall with a spring floor. When Grandfather Noyes added the front part, the old ball room was divided into bedrooms, one of them being used as a nursery. When Arthur and Helen were children, I can remember the peculiar sound the floor made when they were being rocked.



There were seven bedrooms on the second floor (the maids slept under the eaves on the third) and how we—and frequent guests—ever squeezed into them is a marvel. We doubled up and redoubled but it was quite jolly and we were, of course, much less accustomed to luxuries than the present generation, even in our New York house. Baths in Lyme were taken entirely in tin tubs with large bath sheets spread under them. The water was brought in painted cans or a big brass pitcher.

Along one side of the second floor back hall ran a wooden bench which held miscellaneous things. We used to climb from this bench on to the roof to eat grapes from the arbor.

Aunt Jane, who lived with us for many years, hoarded belongings and it was agony to her to throw things away. One summer, Father's patience gave out when rats and silver worms and moths were too much in evidence and he had the entire contents of the attic carried out and dumped on the south lawn. He gave Aunt Jane and the rest of us a day's grace to save what we wanted and I can see now the queer protégés whom she gathered to poke about the pile with canes and umbrellas



and go off laden with strange loot. I suppose much was burned that we would value now—old bandboxes, hoopskirts, bonnets, papers. It was vandalism, but it greatly simplified Mother's housekeeping.

Among the contents of the attic that escaped were the "dress-up trunks," filled with bits of old party dresses, fancy costumes that Grandmother had made for her children, odd trinkets and accessories. She encouraged theatricals and games of all kinds. One of my earliest memories is of her toiling up the attic stairs with me to look up something for us to dress up in. She had to sit down several times on the stairs but she laughed about her "old legs."

The dress-up trunks are still in existence, sadly depleted by long use and much lending.

The bedrooms had matting on the floor and small rugs or strips of carpet. The beds were miscellaneous — mahogany, cherry or painted, with some lumbering black walnut pieces bought in the '50's or '60's. All the furniture was miscellaneous, marking the procession of the generations. The survivals of the 18th and early 19th centuries and the charming productions in embroidery, worsted work, beading, paint-

ing and home-made upholstery, of Grandmother and the aunts, gave the warmth, pattern and personal quality that many New England houses lacked.

There was a little printed chintz here and there and there are remnants of beautiful printed linen, but not the quantities you see in modern revivals of early New England. It seems impossible for us now to recapture the aspect of the old well-bred homes. We would have to change our own habits, needs and outlook too radically. Restraint was second nature to them; even the well-to-do spent money gingerly. If profusion had been possible, it would have come under the ban of taste and morals. They cushioned the chairs and had pillows on the sofas, but sat upright by preference—a lady or gentleman never lounged, and a true lady *never* crossed her knees!

They liked fine clothes, but took meticulous care of them. Mother often described the three grades of aprons they wore, sometimes one on top of the other when they were in a hurry; a gingham apron for messy work, a white one for ordinary use and an embroidered silk one for sewing in the evenings. Grandmother's silk apron is among the old things in the sitting-room





THE UPPER GARDEN



cupboard.

The “place” was a kind of farm in Grandfather’s day, although there were not many acres of land to it. What is now the south lawn was a flower garden, with a fence around it. Where the “circle” now is, the old barn stood, with orchards to the right and left of it. On one side was the ice house and on the other the “smoke house” for hams. Back of the barn was the domain of the pigs and chickens and cows. My memory does not locate them exactly, although the animals themselves were important factors in our childhood. I can remember that Will and Charlie used to tie thread to pieces of corn placed temptingly on the barn floor. When a chicken had swallowed one, a skillful jerk would bring it up—I used to pretend to be shocked but I did think the expression of the poor old things was funny.

The present upper garden was then a mixture of fruit, vegetables and flowers. On one side of it was the Conference Room of the church, on the other, the post office. We used to climb through a window reached from a woodpile into the back room where the letters were distributed. Deacon Beckwith, the postmaster, was a

good friend and often let us postmark the outgoing letters and, incidentally, listen to the absorbing conversation of the neighbors and village characters who gathered at mail time.

When I was still a child, Father began making "improvements" in the place according to the ideas of his day, turning the garden on the south into a lawn, pushing back the barn to allow for the present driveway, developing the present lower garden out of swampy land. The old apple trees and the rock were left, and the place has had no radical change since then, except that he later moved the barn to its present location in the meadow and built a large stable and outhouses which were burned in May, 1907, two months before the church burned, and were rebuilt that summer.

There was always a well by the side door of the house, as there is now, and the boys had parallel bars near it for exercise. Much of our play was around there or in the orchard.

This well shows in the family group painted by Grandmother of her children. She has "arranged" her composition somewhat by bringing the Connecticut River into the picture, but the likenesses were all







FAMILY GROUP  
Portrait of her children, painted by Grandmother Noyes

good and Mother's is astonishingly like her mature face. This is true, too, of the "Little Red Riding Hood" which Grandmother did later, using Mother's face for the child. This gift for likeness and a nice sense of color appear in all her work.

The original of the Family Group belonged to Uncle Dan and used to hang in his "den" among his intimate possessions. The copy in Lyme was done by Aunt Caro years later.

When I was a very small child we used to move down to New York in the Fall by the Hartford boat which docked at Lyme, about ten o'clock at night. We had a solemn farewell ritual of dancing, with the Griffins, in a circle around the lamp post on the corner.

I can remember waiting drearily on the landing. The boat was sometimes quite late, and the boys were keen to pass the time by exploring the dock, but we were kept sternly on the hard benches.

We came up by train and I shall never forget the ecstasy of the first Lyme sensations after a winter in the city; the characteristic smell of the old house, the birds, the grass in the meadows, the church bell—a constant refrain through our lives—ring-

ing the hours, calling to service, tolling for the dead; the sound of oxen going by to the droning and profane accompaniment of their drivers' voices; and the comfortable cackling and crowing of the chickens.

As the summer wore on, other voices entered the chorus—locusts, a long sleepy sizzling sound in the hot summer days, swelling and falling—tree toads in the muggy dog days, irritatingly persistent; and toward Fall, the katydids, the most friendly and amusing of the insects. They spoke up toward dusk—one, then another, then a chorus, which was almost human and vaguely exciting to a child, lying in bed and trying not to end another beautiful day by going to sleep.

But the strongest memory, after all, is the sitting-room; it was the "scene" for our family life, the background against which all the older figures stand out. Different at different seasons and hours and under the vicissitudes of sickness, funerals, prayer-meetings (in Grandfather's day) or parties, yet it always came back, like Mother's face, to its reassuring and comfortable familiarity.







GRANDFATHER NOYES  
(Daniel Rogers Noyes)



GRANDMOTHER NOYES  
(Phoebe Griffin Lord)

From miniatures painted by Grandmother about 1827

## II. THE PEOPLE IN THE HOUSE

THE house came into the family four years after Grandfather (Daniel Rogers Noyes) married Grandmother (Phoebe Griffin Lord). Up to her marriage, Grandmother had lived with her mother and many sisters in the Joseph Lord house which stood at the head of the street, where the library now is.

Grandfather's family came from Stonington, Connecticut, and, for two generations, had lived in Westerly, R. I.

In "Noyes-Gilman Ancestry," the invaluable family record which Uncle Charlie and Aunt Lily Noyes gathered for their own children, but also for all of us, you will find an account of the sometimes distinguished and always public spirited line of Noyes ancestors from whom Grandfather was descended.

From the first James Noyes, who came to this country from England with his cousin and close intimate, Rev. Thomas Parker, and spent his laborious and courageous life in Newburyport; through his son, James, of Stonington, one of the

founders of Yale College, down through Col. Joseph of Revolutionary days, some fibre of character held strongly and tenaciously. In our day, we could recognize it still in the characters of our Noyes uncles and aunts and in Mother. They were of the breed that carries and is not carried, through life; who build and shape. Grandfather lacked some of the aggressive traits of his forbears, but he had integrity and industry, almost to a fault. Aunt Jane used to think he drudged. "There goes your Grandfather to that store—he goes back and forth a thousand times a day!" "A thousand, Aunt Jane?" "Well,—that was *Griffinizing* a little but he does it innumerable times."

After some business experience in Newport, Groton, and later, New Orleans, he came to Lyme, where his sister Martha had married Dr. Richard Noyes, and started a general store in partnership with Mr. Stephen Lord. This was about 1820 or 1821. It was expected that Lyme would grow and might rival New London or even New Haven as a port and that the firm would build up an import trade to grow with the place. A thriving business had been conducted in earlier years be-



tween Lyme and the West Indies.

The only West Indian articles that I ever heard of Grandfather's importing were Jamaica ginger and Jamaica rum. This latter was apparently a lively trade but when the first temperance movement reached Lyme, Mr. Lord and Grandfather carried out their stock of liquor and dumped it into Lieutenant River.

Cousin Stephen's moral ardor may have been somewhat stimulated by the fact that he was courting Sarah, daughter of old Squire McCurdy. The Squire's temperance principles were evidently strong, for a letter from John McCurdy to his sister, congratulating her on her engagement, says he understands that "all objections to Stephen have been washed away in a flood of cold water."

The Stephen Lords lived in the house on the green which descended to their daughter, Mrs. Edward Dorr Griffin, and then to her daughters, Cousin Augusta and Cousin Sarah.

Lyme did not turn into a thriving port and Grandfather made one or two trips West to investigate business possibilities. The pull of Lyme seems to have been strong, however, and he finally settled

down here, buying out Mr. Lord's share in the business. A full account of these years is given in Uncle Charlie's book; and in an old letter from Uncle Dan, I came across a nice side light on Grandfather's business reputation. A banker, who had dealt with him in earlier years wrote: "I remember well Mr. Daniel R. Noyes, a man for whom I had a profound respect as representing to my mind the best type of New England character, in sturdy integrity, a fine sense of personal dignity and high self-respect; a man who knew no road but a straight one."

The family income was small, however, and Grandmother helped by conducting a day school, with a few boarding pupils, teaching her own children along with the others.

Her courage and energy apparently never failed, nor her zest for living. She had one old colored woman to do the housework and I think one of her sisters was generally with her and, until they married, her daughters, Aunt Caro, Aunt Julia and Mother.

She did much of the work of the house, taught her pupils, found time for her painting, her embroidery and her reading,



was active in the church, where Grandfather was a deacon for over thirty years, and in addition to all of this, was a centre for her childrens' friends and the young people whom her school gathered around her.

Aunt Caro wrote: "We used to have a great deal of company. Mother kept school all winter and entertained all summer. Young men used to come up from New York by boat to see us: Gifford Agnew, Robert and Will Halstead, Mr. McCarty, Mr. Hyde, Will Soutter, a friend of your Uncle Dan's and especially of your Mother's."

Scrapbooks and portfolios have preserved a record of their amusements. Writing games were popular. Grandmother had a neat turn for verse, as fragments show. The monograph on Grandfather and Grandmother in Uncle Charlie's book is so perfect that it is hard to choose for quotation, but these sentences will give part of the picture.

"She loved young people and liked to have them around her and was conscious of her power over them. Her many cares never made her dull . . . she assisted in tableaux, concerts, charades and games of

all sorts and liked to join in the poetry games that we used to play in those days. One little rhyme of hers, written in the game where each draws a question and a word to insert in a rhyming answer, has been preserved. We had just returned in the rain after a fishing trip with Mr. Miner and the question was: "Is Mr. Miner one of Nature's noblemen?" The word, "Rule"—

"Of Nature's nobles—Mr. Miner?  
Just let me look in my definer  
To see the marks that Nature uses  
To show the great ones whom she chooses.  
First, they love power and so does he;  
He rules on land and on the sea;  
He rules at home—that is, he *tries*;  
He rules his boat, no one denies;  
Would rule creation, but 'tis plain,  
Can't rule his wife or rule the rain."

"Mother made her house the center of social life for the young people. Dancing, which a good many people of that time disapproved, she advocated strongly and she and Father joined with us often in the Virginia Reel which terminated our evenings. She defended this so vigorously that some of the church people who opposed it were greatly incensed. Old Mr. Manwaring even prayed in Prayer Meet-

ing that she might be led to see the error of her ways. She never was led to see it, however. . . . Our home life was very different from that of traditional New England, for there was an understanding between parents and children, a patient appreciation on one side and an affection on the other, which made the intercourse freer than ordinary."

Card-playing, too, Grandmother encouraged. Aunt Jane used to tell us that when they were all girls, in the old house at the head of the street, Grandmother got hold of a pack of cards somehow and they played games surreptitiously in the attic. They kept the cards hidden in an old sock, one of a pair that their mother had put away for safe-keeping. One rainy night the minister drove in, drenched from a round of parochial calls, and Great-Grandmother Lord remembered the socks and fetched them from the attic for him to put on. While the guilty daughters waited in agony, he slowly drew out the cards—with all the effect that one would expect. This was about the year 1810.

The old letters show Grandmother and her sisters in their young days as singularly like girls of all generations. When



she was about sixteen, her older sister Harriet was visiting their uncle, Edward Dorr Griffin, who was then President of Williams College. Grandmother's letters adjure her to bring some "beaux" back to Lyme with her. She gives the news of the village and describes the latest arrival, a youth from Yale, rustivating at the parsonage to be tutored by the minister, Mr. Rockwell. She says—"You may imagine that I find many errands to the Rockwells'."

Aunt Jane used to tell us of the winter parties of young people, who would fill a big sleigh and ride off into the country, visiting at one house for a night, then on to another until they had made the rounds of their friends—not the traditional picture of Puritan New England!

Grandmother was slow to adopt the fashion of hoopskirts, thinking them foolish and inconvenient. When her daughters finally persuaded her to put one on and she was still unused to managing it, it happened that Grandfather brought over to our house the tiny congregation who had gathered in the cold church for "Thursday Evening Meeting." They took their places in a decorous circle in the par-







AUNT HELEN, IN HER YOUTH  
(Helen Gilman Noyes)

lor and Grandmother sat down last. She should have brushed her skirts gracefully to one side but instead she sat straight down and up flew the hoop in front. Mother never forgot the withering look, struggling with mirth, that Grandmother cast at her frivolous daughters.

Mother had an astonishing faculty—quite without design—of making her mother a living presence for us. It must have been that Grandmother's personality was so strong, so important in her children's lives, that she impressed herself in unforgettable detail. She was not a vague saintly memory for them; not a saint at all, I am sure, for she had a quick temper and sometimes a sharp tongue and was a Spartan in her own self-discipline and in her standard for her children.

Aunt Helen (Gilman) Noyes remembered that when she made her first visit to Lyme as Uncle Dan's fiancée, she was frightened and rather piqued by Grandmother's strictness. She had been brought up in New York in what was luxury for those days and when she felt ill she was used to being a little petted.

One Sunday she had a headache and decided she would not go to church. "Would

it kill you to go?" said Grandmother. "No," said Aunt Helen, and she went.

Mother had much the same Spartan attitude about illness and when we were children, we rarely could "get away with" imaginary and convenient ailments.

Grandmother had no patience with affectation or hypocrisy. It was the period when an interesting delicacy was considered attractive in young women and ruddy health was vulgar. A heroine of the day—I have forgotten in what novel—used to declare that she had dined quite heartily on the wing of a lark; and a popular and vulgar jingle is evidently of the same date:

"Iolanthe in the pantry  
Feasting on a chicken bone—  
How she gnawed it, how she clawed it  
When she found herself alone!"

One of the older pupils was given to posing on the sofa in a languid attitude if there were men near by, but Grandmother made short work of her if she caught her at it. Her faculty for deflating pretense may have been rather cruel but she never discouraged enthusiasm.

But her spirit—her indomitable spirit and her unquenchable sense of the ridic-

ulous!— they crop up in every story that has come down to us. Her comments on her neighbors were pithy and she used to say of some of them that they allowed their lives to narrow and shrink so that they were like the man in one of Poe's stories whose prison closed in year by year till it became his coffin.

Grandfather was the soul of hospitality and brought many unexpected guests home with him, especially visiting ministers. Aunt Caro liked to tell of one particularly hectic day. When Grandfather was seen approaching with some blackcoated additions to the already large housefull (there were twenty-one guests that day), Grandmother struck an attitude at the sight of them and declaimed:

“Come one, come all, this rock shall fly  
From its firm base as soon as I!”

Then she flew at her preparations and probably enjoyed it.

As I said earlier, Grandmother stayed much with her uncle, George Griffin, in New York. Their city house was in Beech Street and their summer home, to which they drove every year in the family coach, was out in the country in the vicinity of what is now Twenty-third Street. In later



a political “scrap” among the girls in the school just before the election of 1856. It is worth quoting:

### THE EVIL OMEN

Sadly the wind was moaning  
Among the naked trees  
And a sound of coming evil  
Seemed to sigh in every breeze.

But within, a gay young circle  
Are laughing time away  
And merrily discussing  
The topics of the day.

The all-absorbing subject  
Is the morrow’s great election  
And like older politicians  
They divide upon the question.

Not that they care if free men  
Are trodden down by knaves,  
Or reflect upon the sufferings  
Of the poor unhappy slaves.

They only choose for fancy  
Or the music of a name  
Nor think of bleeding Kansas  
Nor mourn their country’s shame.

One wishes she’d a blackey  
To stand behind her chair  
One hopes to go to Washington  
And welcome “Jessie” there.

For Fremont and for Freedom  
New England girls contend;  
Sag Harbor goes Buchanan,—  
Even Fillmore has a friend.

As the contest waxes warmer  
Each flies in eager haste  
The name of her own candidate  
Upon the wall to paste.

Who enters at this moment?  
'Tis the Madame come at last;  
And around in consternation  
Gazes silent and aghast!

At length words find an utterance  
"What—traitors?" she exclaims,  
And seizing old Buchanan  
Consigns him to the flames.

But wonder upon wonder!  
How can I the fact relate?  
When all thought his name had perished  
He was snatched from out the grate.

No smell of fire passed on him—  
A "puff" his cause sustained,  
Raising him to the draught above  
Where in smoke he still remained.

The Omen is a bad one—  
"Alas," the lady cries;  
"For Freedom and for Kansas  
My only hope now dies!"

There are other references to the election and the unusual interest taken by the ladies of the family that year—evidently an exception to their general attitude. Of course the slavery issue roused the women of the day and contributed indirectly to the growth of the suffrage movement—but Grandmother gives no evidence of feminist leanings. She was a rebel in nothing except social custom and that was for practical not philosophical reasons.

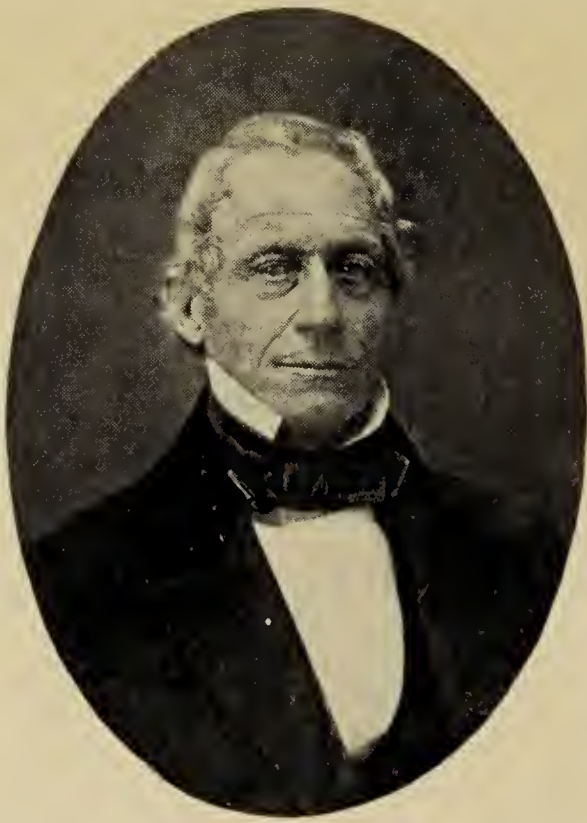
Grandmother Noyes died in 1875 and Grandfather followed her two years later. She almost died on her feet, as she wanted to do, but for the last few days they kept her in bed. Uncle Dan and his eldest daughter “Posy” (Helen), a little girl not more than seven, were there at the end. Mother had been with them but had to return to New York and could not get back in time.

Grandmother was terribly troubled lest they were not giving Posy a good time and used to ask—“What are you doing to amuse that child?” She was distressed to “take so long dying” for she was not used to being a care to anyone.

She was much troubled with insomnia







GRANDFATHER NOYES



GRANDMOTHER NOYES

and as Mother sat fanning her one night, she broke a long silence to say: "Josie, I think if you would send for Mr. ——— (the minister)" — Mother was alarmed and puzzled for Grandmother had never depended much on priestly ministrations. She went on—"I think if you could get Mr. ——— here, I might get a little sleep." This story greatly endeared her to us; we, too, had slept through sermons of later days.

I have found the letter in which Uncle Dan tells Aunt Caro (living then in St. Louis) of Grandmother's death.

"Mother is beyond our care but our love still reaches her. . . . She always went before us and is in heaven now.

"I could not wish her back to suffer as she has done. When I told her—'Mother, we are going to make you well again,' she said—'Oh, no—it would be too unkind to bring me back.' I did not realize how near the end was and talked with her but little. Her thoughts were only for others. Her children, she said, she loved to think of—they were such a comfort to her and it made her forget her suffering.

"When Father came down early this morning, Mother asked him to raise her

up a little. She put her arm around his neck and he kissed her.”

Grandfather was pitiful after she had gone. He rarely missed a day in his visits to her grave. He would limp with his crutches along the familiar path to the cemetery, which has been well worn by all of us; we have never thought it a dreary or funereal place. We always walked to the Meeting House Hill on Sunday afternoons and stopped often at the cemetery to look at the curious old stones, and eat sassafrass leaves, which grew in great abundance along the fences.

There was Captain Reinold Marvin's stone, with his first and second wives lying either side.

“This deacon, aged 68  
Is freed on earth from sarvin.  
May for a crown no longer wait  
Lyme's captain, Reinold Marvin.”

Then there was “Mrs. Sarah Griswold, Single Woman,” which puzzled us greatly till it was explained that all spinsters of a certain age were called “Mistress” as a mark of respect.

We were fascinated by a monument inscribed “To the loveliest of women” because, knowing that the gentleman mar-







REYNOLD MARVIN'S TOMBSTONE  
Old Lyme Cemetery



"TO THE MEMCRY OF THE LOVELIEST OF WOMEN"

ried a second time, we wondered what was left for him to say of Number Two should she die before he did. I believe she was tactful enough to survive him.

Grandfather had been a handsome man in his youth, as his pictures show, with a charming manner. In fact, the story was that Grandmother did not embrace certain matrimonial possibilities that opened up in New York because of the good looks of "Cousin Daniel." I know of one New York lawyer, who made a considerable reputation in later years, and whom she refused; in this case, with the encouragement of her mother, to whom a young city lawyer looked much less substantial than a man with acres in the country. Another suitor was Mills, one of the pioneers in the missionary movement, whom she met when she visited her Uncle Edward in Williamstown. Just what the family attitude was in his case I have never heard although Grandmother's own feelings were definite enough!

Great Grandmother took a much more active part in her daughters' matrimonial decisions than the modern parent is supposed to do. She had struggled against poverty for many years and was as anx-



ious to have her daughters comfortably “settled” as any worldly city matron.

Grandfather occupied himself about the place in his last years. He was fond of white things, white horses, white chickens, and an old white cat who used to go with him when he went to and from the store—walking seriously beside him across the churchyard as befitted a family retainer.

Another retainer was “Old Joe” Mitchell, a primitive little creature of few ideas and fewer words, who came to Lyme from Block Island. He would follow Grandfather about the place, growling and grumbling, but he was a good worker. He lived in the woods at “Land’s End” on the Benjamin Franklin Post Road and his daughters were named Alweedy Fernandy and Fanny Fern. His son was Cursilla, popularly called “Cuss.”

After Grandfather’s death, Joe used to call on us twice every summer to pay his respects and get a little money for tobacco. I well remember Mamma’s struggles to make conversation. One day she was asking him hopefully about a new son-in-law, whom one of the daughters had brought to live with them. Joe’s brief comment settled that matter, however:







MINIATURE OF MOTHER AND AUNT JULIA  
Painted by Grandmother Noyes

“Waal—he’s thyah.”

We had various callers of this sort, survivals of some earlier period in the family and I always marvelled at Mother’s patience in the dreary stretches of their endless visits. There was Floy — who had lived once with Aunt Jane and who was capable of staying on for hours quite mute but apparently enjoying herself.

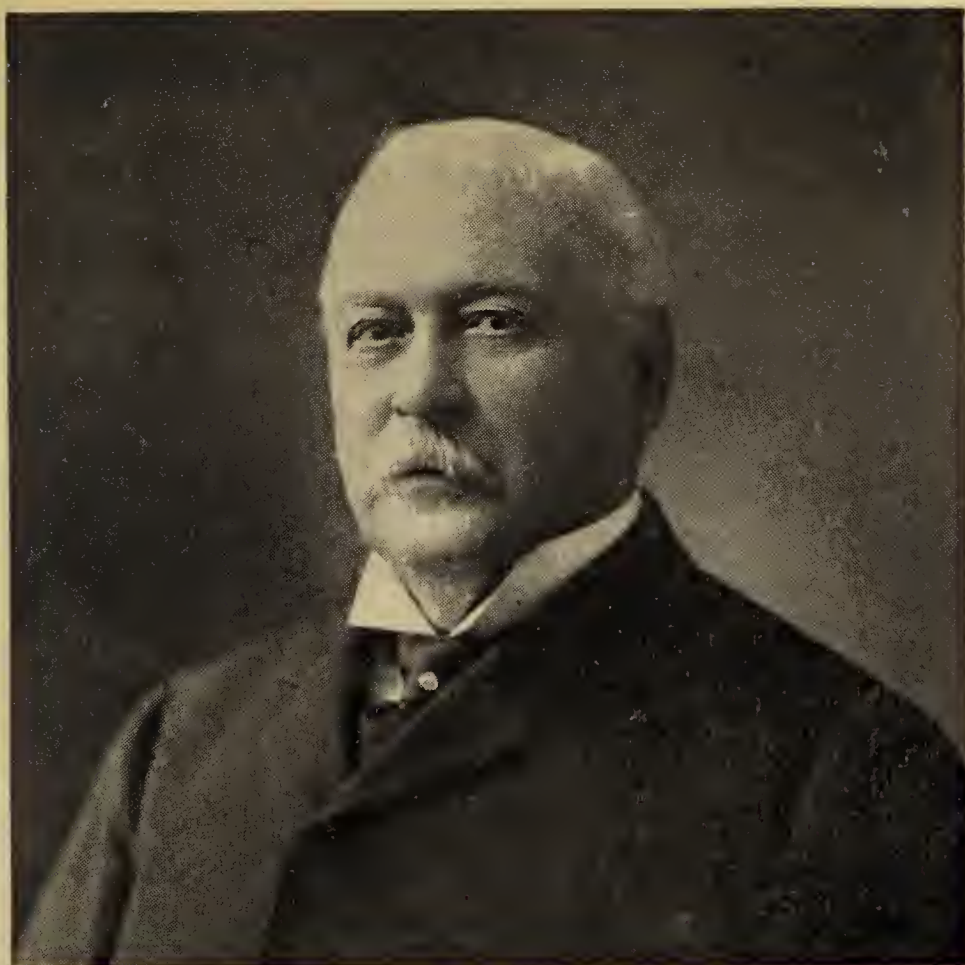
One early visitor, eagerly watched for by all the family was “Madame Louise,” a pitiful little Frenchwoman who had somehow strayed into the unfamiliar New England atmosphere years before, and who lived as a dependent with a family in East Lyme. Grandmother often invited her to spend the day with us and she entranced us with the flowers which she cut from colored paper and pasted in designs of exquisite delicacy. A number of these are in the old portfolios—a particularly charming one was her wedding gift to Mother and Father.

Grandfather was very gentle and good to children. I can remember sitting on his knee and pressing my head against his broadcloth coat, which rarely appeared except on Sundays and smelt of sweet herbs and the mustiness of shut up cupboards.

The home, with all its frugality and hard work, must have been bound together by deep ties of feeling. I wonder if the basis of it was not that Grandfather and Grandmother really stayed in love with one another. The sons and daughters never lost their close touch with it, as the bundles of old letters show. In one homesick little scribble Aunt Caro, visiting when she was sixteen in New York, sends her love to the animals and the chickens and the "birds in the vines over the porch."

Uncle Dan describes, in a letter to Aunt Caro in 1858, a Thanksgiving in Lyme (he was then in business in New York). "Thanksgiving at home was the genuine article—dinner was in old style, turkey, chicken pot-pie, all sorts of other fixings, and then the grand trial of skill in the pies. Mother had made the pumpkin and Aunt Jane the mince. I tried and appreciated both as well as I could but unfortunately I had nearly lost my appetite when I came to them. After dinner, the girls and I turned out into the yard and ran off the effects. From morning till night, Mother plied me with her various concoctions, currant wine, and elderberry, and cider of Charlie's making, apples and grapes of





UNCLE DAN  
(Daniel Rogers Noyes, 2nd)



AUNT HELEN  
(Mrs. Daniel Rogers Noyes)





her own preserving, cakes and nuts; in fact, I did little except gourmandize.”

“Josie and I spent most of the next day in making calls, on Cousins Kate and Anna, Aunts Harriet, Julia and Dolly, and on Evelyn (McCurdy), who is almost a sister to me, and Judge Waite. They were all pleasant calls and make me more fond of Old Lyme than ever.”

“Josie’s stay at home is evidently doing her good. She is working hard and faithfully and she grows every day more lovable—I am getting very proud of her.”

They all came home for long visits, after they married. Uncle Charlie’s book describes coming once as a surprise to his parents. “I went once to see them unexpectedly in the winter. I reached Lyme in the evening, walking up from the station, and passing in front of the church I saw Mother sitting at her table in the window. She was reading aloud to Father by the light of her lamp and I was so impressed by the picture, a perfect picture of peaceful old age, that I sat for quite a while on the church steps watching them before I went in and interrupted the reading.”

We can never be grateful enough for

these pictures that Uncle Charlie and Aunt Lily have preserved for us.

One of the greatest excitements of our childhood were the visits from these immensely popular uncles. Mother loved them so much that we caught the glow of her pleasure and then they were both, each in his own way, excellent company. Uncle Dan had great charm, softening the sterner lines of his character, and an invigorating vitality. He had nearly died of consumption as a young man but his move to the cold climate of St. Paul and the happiness of his marriage had changed him into a vigorous man who lived out the full span of a useful life. His hair was a gleaming white in his later years, his cheeks red and his step never lost the soldier's tread learned in the Civil War.

He was an easy speaker and I remember one day when he was called upon to address the Sunday School in the Lyme church. This was when your Uncle Arthur was a little boy and he and Helen had been thoroughly and sternly drilled in the Bible by "Sister Kitty." In the course of his talk, Uncle Dan made some statement, put in the form of a question, and to my embarrassment it was promptly and





UNCLE CHARLIE  
(Charles Phelps Noyes)



AUNT LILY  
(Emily Hoffman Gilman Noyes)





loudly challenged by Arthur. Uncle said mildly, "I think I am right about that"—"But Sister Kitty said so" Arthur's small treble rang out through the church. I was sure I should never live down that incident.

Uncle Charlie, the youngest of the family, followed Uncle Dan a few years after the latter moved to St. Paul, and joined him in the business which became the successful house of Noyes Brothers & Cutler. He married Aunt Helen's younger sister, Emily Gilman (Aunt Lily) and the richness of the influence that these two beautiful women brought into our family life can hardly be put into words. Charm, an exquisite personal quality peculiarly their own, intellectual alertness, and high and discriminating standards were their common possession and yet their personalities and interests were widely different. It was only as we grew older that we fully recognized what they had meant to us.

May and I visited them at different times in St. Paul; they often came to Lyme and for many summers at North East Harbor, Aunt Helen was the inspiring center for a group of Noyes and Ludington cousins, and their friends.

The grandparents knew how fortunate

their sons were. It was one of the pleasant thoughts that kept them company in their quiet life in Lyme.

Uncle Charlie's humor was keen and in his youth I am sure he was a bit of a case and had a "way with him." He often entertained us with stories of his childhood and to our delight would sing the old hymns "with quavers" as he had heard them while he sat next to Grandfather in church. I remember particularly:

"Whi—ul the light holds out to burn  
The vi—ulest sinner may return."

and he could give many other old timers.

His blue eyes had a gleam and his virtues, like Uncle Dan's, never seemed to us too bright and good for human nature's daily food.

Aunt Julia Loveland, after her marriage, lived in Wilkes-Barre, which seemed far away in those days, but we had vivid memories of long walks with Uncle George Loveland when they made their rare visits to Lyme. He was very good to us and going off with tin pails for huckleberries was equally popular with him and with his nephews and nieces. His own children were too young then to go with us.







AUNT CARO  
(Mrs. Edmund B. Kirby)



AUNT JULIA  
(Mrs. George Loveland)

Aunt Julia had hazel eyes, very curly light brown hair and much color. She was gentle, thoughtful and rather shy. It shows in the expression on her young pictures. She gave years of devotion to her parents, living on with them after her sisters had gone, until she herself married.

Aunt Caro, the oldest of the family, had gone to St. Louis to live before Mother was married but she came East for long visits bringing one or more of her boys, and in later years she was apt to spend the hot midsummer either with us or with Uncle Charlie in St. Paul. The friendship between the sisters was very close and they rarely missed their weekly letters to each other.

Aunt Caro was tiny with a quaint deprecating gentleness, a wistful humor of expression and a character like fine steel. The struggle of her early married years with the semi-pioneering conditions of her Western home did not daunt her plucky spirit but it intensified that homesick love for Lyme which seems to haunt its children, however deep the roots that they put in other soil. The sight of its rocky pastures and the elms around the green was a deep and never ending solace for her.

On her last visit, the summer before she died, she walked with us one Sunday to the top of Meeting House Hill. She trudged firmly up the rough path—I can see her little figure, bent with age, her resolute step, never short or mincing, and her black bonnet and conservative black dress and scarf. Ethel took a kodak of her, as she stood on the hill with her hand shielding her eyes, quite without consciousness of being watched—looking over the familiar landmarks of the village spread below her. She could see the church spire above the elms, the cemetery showing here and there in the nearer distance with Duck River dividing it in two—the Connecticut River in the far distance, and in the foreground calm open stretches of pasture with granite ledges cropping out, patterned richly with huckleberry and bay, blackberry, sumach, golden rod and asters. Cedar trees, always part of a typical Lyme landscape, accented the line of the stone walls and were even in those days creeping into the pastures. In October, the color is like a Turkish carpet and at sunset it glows like claret.

When Ethel showed her the developed print, she said “You can call it a picture





AUNT CARO ON MEETING HOUSE HILL





of an old woman looking for the last time on the place she loved.”

On the way home, we stopped in to see Cousin Evelyn, and boasted a little about Aunt Caro, who was over eighty, having walked to the top of the hill. Cousin Evelyn—never liking to take a back seat—said, “M-m—yes . . . I own those hills.”

She, herself, was well on toward ninety. After her death, my brother Charlie bought about two hundred acres on the hill, which took in our most familiar spots, including Penny Rock, the delight of every child in our family. When we were small, Father used to enliven the Sunday afternoon walks by slipping on ahead and hiding pennies in the crevices of the rock for us to hunt. We believed firmly—until the age of disillusionment came—that the rock only sprouted them on Sundays. Townsend, when he was about seven, confided in me: “Of course, I know Grandfather puts them there, but I don’t tell him because it gives him so much pleasure.”

We knew where the old horse block stood, marking the site of the earliest church, and two subsequent ones, both

burned by lightning; and we were always told that the first church was built on the hill to command a wide view of the surrounding country and that an armed guard marched outside the building on the lookout for Indians while the services went on inside.

When the last church on the hill burned, in the early nineteenth century, it was decided to move into the village, and the predecessor—and model—of the present church was built in 1817.

One of the nicest parts of the Sunday walks was getting back to the house with the late sun slanting through the elms on the church and the green. There were huckleberries and milk, perhaps, for supper—and in the evening we sang hymns, each child choosing his or her own, with some heat and squabbles over favorites. When we were very small, Mother played the hymns, then May; and when Ethel came into the family, it fell to her and she led us through with great spirit.

We hear much of the rigors of the New England Sabbath. Even in Grandfather's day, I cannot remember any sense of repression and the day was not referred to as "The Sabbath." That had passed along

with such words as “babe,” “female” and “pious.”

We had special Sunday games and story books—many of them mawkish, I am sure—and much going to church. More emphasis was laid on introspection and an “inner life.” The pendulum has swung far in the other direction now, but the sense those long Sundays gave of serenity, of private, very personal hours spent, so far as I was concerned, in following my own bent according to my mood, were an enrichment and not a subtraction from life.

Grandmother’s and Grandfather’s religion was reserved and inexpressive and it was unusual for them to speak of their own feelings.

There is a letter written by Grandmother to Aunt Caro when the latter had lost a little boy. She herself had gone through the same loss; her oldest boy, Edmund, died when he was five years old. The letter breathes a very agony of comprehension but it is written to fortify and not to weaken her daughter’s courage.

It is hard for me to write objectively about *your* grandmother, our mother. I have been talking much lately with friends



who have tried to re-create the generations of the past, and they are agreed that our forbears lose in reality, in "body," in human likability, if we see them with the eyes of too great reverence and affection rather than as detached observers. I am sure this is true, but, what are you going to do if all the data you have,—your own memories, the feelings of brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, the impressions of friends, the old letters and pictures, point all one way! If a human life has produced nothing but love, if everyone who has touched it is moved to enthusiasm, if you yourself can remember only lovable foibles and no meanness or ugliness, what does stern realism demand?

Mother was beautiful—the testimony of many eyes beside ours bears that out—with a nobility of structure and poise which outlasted youth. She was gracious and unself-conscious and incapable of playing for effect. When she went to New York to visit, as a girl, she took the same fresh ingenuousness that had charmed Grandmother Noyes' admirers in an earlier day. One New York contemporary said of her: "When Josie Noyes came here, we others simply had to stand aside."



MOTHER  
(Josephine Lord Noyes  
Ludington)



JOSEPHINE NOYES  
LUDINGTON



CHARLES HENRY  
LUDINGTON



Aunt Caro wrote of her: "I was away from home so much when your Mother was young and your Aunt Julia being nearer my age, I seem to recall little in the way of incident to tell you. The slender, dark-eyed, bright little sister was sometimes left out of the older ones' consultations and confidences and, I hate to remember, sometimes pushed away because she 'leaned too hard.' How many leaned on her in later years!"

"I cannot remember that I ever saw her out of temper in my life. She always seemed beautiful to us. Her mouth was then a perfect cupid's bow. I remember a large party or wedding in Lyme when we were very proud of her. She was sixteen years old, and she wore white muslin with a cherry colored sash and geraniums in her hair. She and Martha Noyes, who was at that time considered the beauty of Lyme, were the belles of the ball."

"Your Mother must have been about sixteen when Mrs. Halstead invited her to spend the winter with her in New York (Mrs. H. having visited in Lyme the previous summer) and have singing lessons. She made quite a sensation among the young men and their house became a popular re-



sort. Your Uncle Dan at once became the object of attentions of all sorts—they could not do enough for him. And it was not only the young men. Mr. James Gerard, who met her at Uncle's, wanted Aunt Griffin to arrange to have her spend the next winter at his house and be introduced into society with his daughter. An old Italian, who gave her singing lessons, was so anxious to have her continue that he offered to teach her for nothing."

"All this admiration did not seem to turn her head at all. I remember just how she looked when she went to Carrie Ely's wedding, where she met your Father, perhaps because I made her bonnet and helped with her other things. It was a new spring outfit, a green and white summer silk, a black silk mantilla, and a straw bonnet with green fringy trimmings and pink flowers."

I must tell you the story of Father's first meeting with Mother. He was fourteen years older than she, a business man well launched in New York affairs. He was expecting to go to Miss Ely's wedding but was kept down town so late that he missed the church ceremony. Of two minds as to whether to try the reception,





MOTHER

he finally went and there he saw Mother in the distance. With his usual energy he got himself introduced and did not leave her until she herself left. Then, armed with permission to call, he sallied forth that very evening to Uncle George Griffin's where he inquired for "Miss Noyes." Aunt Caro was visiting there at the time and came down with a puzzled expression and his card in her hand. He looked at her blankly and explained that she wasn't the one he wanted. She said "It must be my sister" and sent for Aunt Julia. When another strange lady appeared, Father was quite desperate until they said—"It must be little Josie that you want" and sent him on to the Halstead's, where she was staying. He pursued his courtship vigorously and they were married in Lyme on August 1, 1860.

Father, almost at once, bought the house, 276 Madison Avenue, where they lived for forty-eight years, Mother dying there on April 17, 1908, and Father on January 1, 1910.

In our early childhood our summers were divided between Carmel, Father's old home in Putnam County, N. Y., where his mother and sisters still lived, and



Lyme. After Grandmother Ludington's death, we spent our whole vacation time in Lyme and only made occasional visits to the Carmel aunts, although we always had pleasant times with them and they were very good to us. An old scrap book and several family letters tell of a particularly nice Christmas there with a dazzling tree which I can still remember as the folding doors between the parlors were thrown open.

As long as Aunt Lavinia, the last of the unmarried aunts, was alive we visited her and she was often with us in New York and Lyme.

Lyme drew us more and more, however, and except for the winters the old place has never been without some Ludingtons from 1860 to the present. Aunt Caro's notes say: "Two of Mr. Ludington's sisters came to Josie's wedding and I wondered if they thought the simple young country girl quite good enough for their brother, who, they might naturally think, could have any one he wanted; but I think the best thing that ever happened to that family was getting her into it. She was always the one to go to Carmel and look after the mother and sisters in case of sick-





KATHARINE  
LUDINGTON  
Miniature painted by Aunt Caro



MARY LOUISE  
LUDINGTON



WILLIAM HOWARD LUDINGTON, ARTHUR CROSBY LUDINGTON AND CHARLES HENRY LUDINGTON, JR.



ness and was as good a sister to them as she was to us. But *how many* cares seemed to fall upon her—looking after Father and Mother in Lyme, and the aunts as long as they lived; and oh, how good she was to me, no one could ever know!” Aunt Caro was right about the blessing that she was to the family in Carmel. They loved her but never understood her. One of the aunts there was somewhat given to emotional abandon in crises. She always wanted Mother near but could not comprehend her pleasant and calm reserve. “You are so cold, Josie—you don’t feel things as I do.”

None of us can ever remember seeing Mother “give way,” but there were times when the look on her face was much worse than tears. We knew her best, however, as a cheerful and infinitely supporting presence, invariably interested and amused by the smallest things that we ran to tell her about. The few sharp and sudden glimpses that I ever got of tragic, hidden feeling were so upsetting that I tried to drive them out of my mind.

She was frank and natural and carried her ingenuousness into the conventional atmosphere of New York, but her inner



life was shut away from our sight—and, I think, from everyone's. She protected herself, perhaps; she was inarticulate and incapable of the kind of self-assertion that emotional expression requires.

We poked fun at her, teased her about little habits and tricks of speech, "bossed" her and tormented her about her clothes (but that was because we were so proud of her beauty and her slender, stately figure); were bumptious and superior about our own opinions, disappointed her, tried her in a thousand ways—and yet knew in our hearts that she was the staff of life for us all.

Father was utterly dependent on her, adored her, absorbed her. He never spared himself, he worked incessantly, he gave himself in many public projects, he had a wiry energy that did not flag until extreme old age. He loved his family, thought for them, would almost have liked to breathe for them and yet never gave himself leisure to really enjoy them or his pleasant home. The times that we can remember him as free enough from care to expand into geniality are few—although I know that the other side of him was much stronger in his youth.



MOTHER AND FATHER ON THE SIDE PORCH OF THE NEW HOUSE



Mother's life was unquestionably cramped by his dependence and our demands and she never knew the free self-expression which in these days is set up as the supreme desideratum. How completely did she realize herself? Was it perhaps success enough to have become the very image of beauty itself to her children, to have made a place quite apart in our memories?—not a shrine, for that is aloof and impersonal, and she was as close, as intimately ours as the air we breathed. Is it not something never to have disappointed us? Is it not self-realization of a kind to have left such a memory that it is impossible for those who knew her to speak of her without emotion? We have to ask ourselves these questions, for the thought of her might be too poignant otherwise.

When I summon up pictures of my younger days in Lyme, the house and the place are peopled not only by my older sister and brothers—and myself—in the 1870's, but, with equal vividness by a long legged boy and girl in the '80's and early '90's.

Arthur and Helen knew the old house and were just emerging from childhood



when we moved into the new one. They knew Lyme before it had changed much and their interests and friends and “range” were not very different from ours, although Grandmother’s generation had pretty much gone before they came along.

They invented their occupations just as we had. They had long hours to fill with no tutors, “country day schools” or organized sports to take the place of their own resourcefulness. They lived a great deal in books and got many of their games from their reading, sometimes with most surprising results. I remember their mythology phase (Bulfinch’s *Age of Fable* and Hawthorne’s *Tanglewood Tales* were to the fore) in which they personified classic figures, sometimes without external “properties,” sometimes assisted by cheese cloth, gold paper fillets, etc. They roped in everyone who was willing or even acquiescent: the nurse of that day, Mary (not Mary Corish), John, the coachman (these two were courting which helped very much), members of the family, and the animals.

One day I went down to the stable to give an order, and was seized upon by the children—“Oh, Sister Kitty, you are just



ARTHUR AND HELEN



ARTHUR CROSBY  
LUDINGTON



HELEN GILMAN  
LUDINGTON (ROTCH)



what we need—I'm Apollo and Helen's Minerva and Mary's Ceres, and John's Jupiter (only he says he's not Jupiter, he's Stupider) and we want you for Juno!"

They were constantly making collections; stamps, shells, insects, posters. Once, they collected pictures of celebrities, men and women, cut from papers and magazines. This was highly educational for they had to find out whether people were well enough known to go into the collection. Then, there was the "Funny Book" with jokes, cartoons, etc., gathered painstakingly. They used to come to me seriously and ask: "Is this funny enough to go in?" This old scrap book is still in the cupboard over the woodbox.

We played innumerable word games, cards and backgammon, and we read aloud practically every evening. The intimacy was so close that the children called the trio "She, He and It"—("It" being Helen). As I think of the books that we read, they make a goodly list with very little thin or trashy "written down to children" stuff among them. There was so much more time in those days for reading!

The children and their nurse Mary were



fond of picnics and often chose the cemetery for convenience. They would sit comfortably with their lunch spread out on a flat tombstone, quite without any feeling of incongruity.

How easy it would be to go on, filling page after page with their doings and their friends, and with those familiar figures always in the background of our picture, the old servants!

There was "Finny", the cook and "Cammy" (Bridget Campbell) the waitress and "Hickey" the laundress who was with us for over thirty years and only left because she was too stout and old to work and had a home with her sister. When the awful parting day came, she embarrassed and almost annihilated Father by falling on his neck!

Then Mary Corish, "Cory"—with her good old face and jet black "front"—she had been nurse to us all in turn and in later years remembered only our virtues. She used to sing Irish songs to us and many of the old Civil War tunes. There was one in particular that I have never heard from any other source!

"Say, darkies, have you seen my Massa with a mustache on his face?" We can all

sing “’Twas *tin* o’clock one Winter’s Night” with Mary’s inflections.

She used to come to see us often, in later years, and when Helen introduced her fiancé, Arthur Rotch, Mary was so excited and embarrassed that all she could say was —“Well, I hope you’ll like Miss Helen!” I suppose she felt a sense of responsibility for her child.

They all stayed with us for years; grumbled, pestered Mother in many ways, loved her and stood by us in sickness and trouble. They are a very real part of the Lyme picture.

### III. GREAT GRANDMOTHER LORD AND THE GREAT AUNTS

**G**REAT GRANDMOTHER—"P. Lord," as she signed herself in her firm, rather large handwriting,—was born in East Haddam, the daughter of George and Eve Dorr Griffin and the sister of Edward and George Griffin, and other less distinguished brothers and sisters.

She had a vigorous mind and the story is that she read with her brothers Edward and George when they were studying for college. This was unusual for those days when women's education was limited to the rudiments. Her mother, Eve Dorr, was well educated, too, though less academically. We have beautiful examples of Eve's embroidery, somewhat Jacobean in design, which she was taught at a school in Boston. Aunt Harriet and Aunt Caro once visited the old Griffin house in East Haddam (it had passed out of the family) and found the remains of Eve's frescoes on the walls of one of the rooms, the background a soft Italian pink with traceries of flowers, somewhat like those in



GREAT-GRANDMOTHER, "P. LORD"  
(Mrs. Joseph Lord)





the embroideries. You will find a good account of her in Uncle Charlie's book.

There are a number of Great Grandmother's letters in existence, firm and authoritative in tone. She had to be father and mother both to her daughters. Occasionally, they gave her anxiety and one letter to Aunt Catherine deals very strongly with a practice the latter had of eating chalk to make her complexion white. After dwelling on the dangers of this curious habit, she ends the letter: "My child, I command you—eat no more chalk.

Your aff. mother,

P. LORD."

She was a handsome woman of considerable presence and she stimulated in every way the intellectual life of her daughters, as she had of her own brothers.

Great Grandfather, Joseph Lord, died in 1812, leaving his wife with eight daughters to raise and educate and a farm to manage. She was equal to the burden but there could not have been many hours left to pursue her studies.

They lived, as I have said, in the old house at the head of the street which was pulled down to make way for the Phoebe

Griffin Noyes Library, built by your Grandfather Ludington. The Lord house was almost falling to pieces then; the last of the sisters had died years before. It was a good type of well-built New England farm house, with an enormous central chimney. I remember particularly the wall paper in the northeast bedroom—a beautiful hand blocked paper, greyish white with figures of Minerva and torches and wreaths in soft blues and reds.

When I was born, four of the sisters were living; Aunt Harriet, Grandmother, Aunt Jane and Aunt Lucy. Aunt Harriet was a personage in the family, a strong individuality, standing and sitting upright, speaking her mind with wit and incisiveness. She was a veritable storehouse of Lyme history and legend,—it is tantalizing to think of what she could contribute to this record if she could only come back and talk to us!

We loved her and used to correspond with her in the winter. She came down almost every day in summer to see us, and was apt to arrive while we lingered at supper—she had hers earlier. I can see her sitting against the wall in the dining room, never leaning back in her chair. She





THE OLD LORD HOUSE



LOOKING UP STREET TOWARD THE LORD HOUSE  
(Grandfather and Dr. Griffin in foreground)





would be wearing a black shawl with an India border, and a bonnet tied under her chin, with a lace veil dropping rather casually from it. The news of the village would be talked over and Aunt Harriet would make her racy comments.

We children believed that she had lived forever and she encouraged the idea. "Yes, my dear, I remember Methuselah perfectly." Why shouldn't she, so far as we could see? The Bible worthies and the old New Englanders who bore so many of their names were somewhat confused in our minds and the sheep on the Lyme hills might well be those that the shepherds of Israel tended.

She was a good neighbor and people spoke of her affectionately and with great respect for many years after she had gone. She and Grandmother seem to have been especially congenial. Their strong wills apparently did not often clash.

Her letters are practical, entertaining and entirely unintrospective. The religious revivals of the first half of the 19th Century seem to have produced two quite different types, according to the natures they acted on. With Grandmother and Aunt Harriet, religious faith steadied character,

was a support in trouble, and found its outlet in practical helpfulness. With others, it led to endless self-analysis and the exaggerated sense of sin which was an inverted egotism. Aunt Julia Ann seems to have suffered from this self-centered religiosity. Her letters are full of it. There is a curious document in her handwriting in which she lists and analyzes her besetting sins in astonishing detail. She was also greatly concerned over the shortcomings of others, although I do not think she was a busybody, and her letters often deplore the spiritual coldness of her sisters.

Yet, she was a woman of evident intelligence—distinctly one of the “intellectuals” among the sisters. They all seem to have taught, at one time or another. Teaching was the one profession open to gentlewomen in those days.

Aunt Josephine, who married Mr. Alexander Lynde McCurdy, was gentle and of a sweet nature, but not a strong mind, Mother said. They went to live in Cleveland, Ohio, and Aunt Jane and perhaps others of the sisters visited them there. After Aunt Josephine died, Uncle Alec and his family migrated to Santa Barbara. He used to come back to Lyme





AUNT HARRIET  
(Miss Harriet Lord)



AUNT JANE  
(Miss Frances Jane Lord)





at rare intervals (never announcing his visits in advance) with his daughters, who were utterly devoted to him. Cousin Gertrude, the unmarried one, was eccentric and witty and a great favorite with her uncle, Judge McCurdy.

“Uncle Alec” is one of the vivid memories of our childhood. He was a wiry and extraordinarily youthful old gentleman and was a constant anxiety to Cousin Gertrude because he would try to repeat the exploits of his boyhood. When he was over seventy, he dove off the Lieutenant River bridge, because he had done it as a boy. One morning early, he slipped out and started to climb the lightning rod of the church. Will and Charlie caught him at it, quite far up the side of the building. He was a man of philosophical and independent mind. Cousin Alice wrote of him: “I never saw anyone in health and enjoyment of life, who so calmly, pleasantly and realizingly looked death in the face. He has said, often: ‘If I were to die today . . . I haven’t a thing to say, but that I acquiesce.’ Just a few weeks before his death, the shaft of his monument arrived and was set up in place with an inscription of his own upon it. . . . ‘I have erected this

monument in my eighty-third year. Conscious that my long and pleasant journey is nearly ended, I shall pass into the great beyond without regret or fears.' ”

There was always an exotic atmosphere of romance about Uncle Alec and his family. California might have been Kamschatka for all we knew about it!

Aunt Catherine was the intimate of her Cousin Sarah (McCurdy) Lord and many devoted letters passed between them when they were separated. She was evidently pretty and perhaps not so strong minded as some of her sisters. Various love affairs of hers come out in the old letters, in which the whole family seemed to take a hand. One suitor, especially, Lucius by name, was very faithful and she apparently played rather fast and loose with him. His letters to her are stilted and high flown, in the style of the day. One summer, Cousin Sarah and I came on a trunk of old, yellow, finely written family correspondence, and spent our evenings deciphering it and re-peopling the houses on the Lyme street with the people who lived in them in the first quarter of the 19th Century. We had Cousin Gertrude Griffin and Mother to turn to, to fill in the gaps—would that we

had written down all they told us!

The romance between Aunt Catherine and "Lucius" absorbed us and little by little we pieced out its phases. It is rather shocking to think of those intimate outpourings coming under our curious eyes, but we were not unsympathetic really—and we did get a strong sense of the lives and viewpoint of our forebears. I used to feel sometimes as if I was living in a dream and 1820 was more real than 1890.

Aunt Catherine finally married her cousin, Mr. Enoch Lord, a widower who farmed his land in Lyme. She died two years later.

Aunt Hepsibah died that same year, 1844. We know very little about her.

Aunt Lucy was mentally unbalanced and, as I remember her, was like a queer and gentle child. She frightened us because she talked to herself, but she was quite harmless. The sisters were very good to her and she lived her life out in her old home.

Cousin Sarah remembers going up there one day with Cousin Lyndon Crawford, a missionary, home on furlough. He was going back to Turkey soon and Sarah remembers the following: "Good-bye, Cou-



sin Lucy—if we don't meet again in this world, I hope we may in a better one.” “Oh, thank you, Cousin Lyndon, but I go out very little nowadays.”

Letters in those days revealed less than in later generations because their writers were so under the thralldom of a correct epistolary style—women, of course, more so than men, but then women produced by far the greater number of letters. Human nature breaks through the stilted phrases, however, and it is not unlike human nature now. They apparently spoke their minds to each other more freely—nerves became jarred, in-laws acted much as in-laws always have, daughters made mistaken marriages and sons-in-law got into trouble and were discussed at length and without mincing words, in a round of family exchanges.

There was a rather burning episode in the case of Aunt Wilder, one of “P. Lord's” sisters, who was a second wife and whose family ructions led to her expulsion from the church. She believed herself to be deeply misjudged and writes in great agony of mind to her brothers and sisters.

In early days, the deacons of the church often prayed for members of the congre-

gation by name and there was much more interference in people's private lives. With greater propriety of language, there seems to have been less delicacy of feeling; certainly, less consideration for personal susceptibilities.

In the immediate families of those that I have written about, there were no family scandals (that ever came to light, at least! and I am sure they would have appeared in the letters if there had been), but there were wide variations of personality, which would take a far more skillful hand than mine to draw. I can simply pass on what I was told, what I read in the letters, what I saw with my own eyes—you must fit the pieces together yourselves. If I seem to have loved some of them too much to see them clearly, at least each fact that I give you is true; and after all, love is not generated by ugly, mean or petty natures.

I have kept Aunt Jane till the last and yet of all the great aunts, she played the largest part in our lives. She was the next to the youngest of Grandmother's sisters and lived until 1888, much of the time with Grandmother and later with us. She kept our old house open through the winters,

after Grandfather died, and she always had some small handmaiden to keep her company. Her correspondence was mostly on postcards—crossed and re-crossed in her fine handwriting so that they were Mother's despair. They had to be deciphered because they often brought family news or commissions. They were filled with references to the doings or shortcomings of the "helper" of the moment. "My little Bump girl forgets . . ." or "Floy always will do" this or that; but she was not ill-natured and was kindness itself to us.

Poor Aunt Jane! I am afraid her life was not an easy one when the large Ludington tribe arrived for the summers. We knew she was good to us—we would listen, spellbound, while she told us stories or repeated whole cantos of Scott from memory. Her voice was deep and sonorous and she recited "with expression." I can remember particularly the dramatic gloom that she managed to throw into "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" where someone keeps moaning "Lost—lost—lost." Aunt Jane's voice went into her boots at the last "lost."

Then there was a delightful Scotch ballad about a wicked Bishop and a "gude gray cat" who was really a witch and who



picked the bishop up one day and dangled him over Vesuvius—"O, Pussy, Pussy, haud your grip!"—Aunt Jane was very dramatic over this.

But we could not resist teasing her and she always rose to the bait. We would hide her spectacles in order to hear her say—"It's a mystery of iniquity where those glasses have gone"—and, of course, it was! or, "they can't have gone without hands"—equally true.

She was credulous and the boys could always get a rise out of her. Our only excuse for this ingratitude was that she was a bit given to talking to us "for our good" and we felt we were sufficiently brought up by our parents as it was. Our feeling was expressed by Arthur at a later date when he took a firm stand against some older brother or sister: "*You* haven't got the bringing of me up!"

Aunt Jane was given to humming to herself, a favorite selection being—"Where, oh where, are the Hebrew Children?" She would poke about the house looking for some lost article or investigating dark corners, for she had an inveterate distrust of all the city servants whom Mother brought in summer. We would



listen delightedly to her deep, solemn voice:

“Where, oh where, is the good old Moses,  
Where, oh where, is the good old Moses,  
Where, oh where, is the good old Moses?  
Safe, safe in the Promised Land.”

occasionally varied by — “Satan’s kingdom’s coming down.”

She sat a great deal in a shaker rocking chair in the northeast corner of the sitting room, where she could look up street and see what was going on. Every day, she made the rounds of the cousins’ houses—Judge McCurdy’s, Cousin Gertrude’s and, when she was living, Cousin Anna Chadwick’s, which is now the parsonage. She was a clearing house for news and always carried the family letters to read to her old friends.

I can see her now, crossing the green, with a white woolen scarf over her head, if it was cool, a funny little “tip” parasol if it was hot, and her dress held straight up in front. Mother once gave her a woolen dressing gown, of a Persian pattern in dark reds, which buttoned down the front in the fashion of the time; she used to distress us by treating it as a dress to be worn

on these daily excursions. She grew a little absent-minded in her old age and we watched nervously when she walked into church lest she might have left her lace barb trailing down the back of her dress instead of being pinned neatly by a brooch, in front. One day she walked in still holding up the little parasol! But in those days the congregation was made up of friends and neighbors who were quite used to the old characters of the town; individualities were stronger and less standardized by convention. You were a law to yourself because everyone knew who you were and you didn't have to bother about their opinions, which had been formed once for all years before!

Judge McCurdy got a dry satisfaction from teasing Aunt Jane—but I doubt if she ever knew she was being teased. She was very placid and sure of herself and had views for every situation neatly arranged in phrases, tucked away for appropriate use. "As a man thinketh, so is he" was one. So and So "is a very worthy man." She worried a good deal about her little property and used to say of good old Deacon Rowland, who managed it for her: "Well, I suppose he *aims* to be honest."

She had the direct way of speaking her mind that was characteristic of her generation, only her mind happened to be a more limited one than her older sisters'. We had a minister at one time, who was given to rather sensational sermons and startled the congregation once by arguing that there was no reason why the wise and foolish virgins might not have been men. Aunt Jane was dining with Cousin Gertrude Griffin that Sunday and was full of the sermon—"Of course, he didn't handle his ten virgins as I would have—Mr. Cary is a good man but he does preach rascally sermons."

One of the great events of her life had been her visit to Aunt Josephine in Ohio, when she had also stayed with a Mr. Allen, a leading citizen of Cleveland. We learned to expect her, about so often, to say—"When I was visiting Hon. John W. Allen of Cleveland, Ohio . . .," and we could imitate the exact inflection of solemn grandeur that she managed to give to his name.

How cruel we were! — and yet, we didn't mean to be. I think Aunt Jane was happy with us and, of course, she did not realize how irreverently her nephews and nieces noted all her funny ways. We really

felt affectionately toward her and missed her when she died—but she did not inspire that lively admiration and interest that Grandmother and Aunt Harriet did.



#### IV. THE COUSINS ON THE GREEN

THE pleasant house that stands on the green at the very end of the village street, spreading out wings on either side as if in welcome, was always referred to as "The Griffins'." The house had belonged to Stephen Lord, who married Sarah Ann McCurdy and had descended to his son-in-law and daughter, Dr. and Mrs. Edward Griffin. In our childhood, they lived there with their daughters, Augusta and Sarah and, much of the time, Mr. John Lord, Cousin Gertrude Griffin's brother. Generations of children have run to and fro between the Griffins' and our house, and there was half way across the green, the "bare spot," a kind of neutral ground where Cousin Sarah and I used to meet to make the weighty decision as to which place we should play in that day.

Cousin Augusta was a little older, and it was only after I was grown, that I came to know and love her. She was a personality in the best Griffin and McCurdy tradition, witty and entertaining, deep in





"THE GRIFFINS' "



FAMILY GROUP IN FRONT YARD OF OUR OLD HOUSE  
(Father, Sarah and Kitty, Mother and Aunt Jane)





her affections, belonging to Lyme in every fibre of her being.

After ours became more of a "place" and less of a farm, the decision generally was in favor of the Griffins'. It provided big barns filled with hay, chickens which laid their eggs so widely and ingeniously as to make it a sporting event to find them, a cow yard around whose fence we used to climb, an orchard with crannies to retreat to when we were anxious to escape observation and two "groves" where we played or lay on the pine needles reading aloud.

I suppose other children have thought that they had just as good times, but we were sure they didn't. We had no lessons in summer and our mothers only asked that we should appear at meal times, washed and brushed. The long free hours of our days, filled with games of our own invention and spent almost entirely out of doors, seemed each an eternity; the summer a boundless vista; the fall, bringing New York and school, was too far off to disturb our peace of mind.

There was a little summerhouse almost hidden in shrubbery in the northeast corner of the Griffins' yard and we played there a dramatic game which we called



“The Rebels Are Coming!” an echo, of course, of Civil War days, although we didn’t realize that. (This must have been about 1878 or 1879). We would stock the summer house with provisions and prepare elaborately for a siege. Occasionally, Will and Charlie and Augusta deigned to play with us, although generally we were beneath their dignity.

Much of the Civil War atmosphere survived—its songs were still sung, charged, even after ten years, with an emotion that we children could feel but not understand. We would come on old newspapers tucked away in cupboards, some black-edged and filled with the accounts of Lincoln’s assassination; old cartoons and pamphlets, pictures of the uncles and their friends in their Union uniforms. Two of these friends, both Lyme men, had died on the same day in the battle of Antietam. I remember the deepening of Mother’s voice when we asked her about their pictures in an old album.

There were many Lyme veterans in those days and Memorial Day services, with the decoration of the graves, was a great occasion. This year, we had our Memorial Service with not a Civil War

veteran left—only the Legion men who served in 1917 and 1918.

Mother used to tell us about the Draft riots in New York and about the day when the Seventh Regiment marched down Fifth Avenue to start for the South, and she watched them from a friend's window. Little as we were conscious of it, the war between the States was woven into the background of our lives and must have had a penetrating influence on us. Heroism was embodied for us in war scenes and characters, idealism in vague thoughts about "freedom" (for slaves) and "Union"—which we didn't understand at all. Lincoln was already enshrined as a martyr but his stature has grown steadily since then. Mother said that almost to the time of his death he was regarded with ill-veiled contempt by New York society. When he was first elected, you could not mention him at a conventional dinner table without bringing down an avalanche of abuse and disgust at his uncouthness and "vulgarity."

But the emotion raised by "John Brown's Body," "Rally 'Round the Flag," "Marching Through Georgia" or "Mine Eyes Have Seen the Coming" was a lan-

guage that needed no translation for children and I suppose did a great deal to vitalize the idea of Country for us. The roots of patriotism, however, went further back than the war. I know that, in my own case, when we sang "My Country 'Tis of Thee" and "I Love Thy Rocks and Rills, Thy Woods and Templed Hills," the mental picture was of Lyme rocks and woods and the Lyme church with its Greek portico; and behind that, vague images of Pilgrim Fathers, heroic privations, Indians, and the stern and rockbound character of every episode of early New England that had been told to us.

We had many children to play with in Lyme and used to go to parties and picnics, and sometimes to "spend the day" at other houses, but Cousin Sarah and I knew each other's language and could play our own games without the necessity of explaining or adapting them to other ideas, so we generally preferred to play at one house or the other and would even run and hide when we saw one "young visitor" approaching whom we had decided we didn't like. He used to be sent to spend the afternoon and we were very hateful to him. I can remember hiding behind the



chimney on the Griffins' roof one day while Cousin Gertrude went about calling, "Sarah! Kitty! Here's Joe Cary to play with you." Finally, we saw him walking sadly home across the green and then we felt mean and ashamed—but we didn't call him back!

We were fond of sitting in private nooks of our own and eating villainous candy from the store, gum drops, rubbery "fishes" in different colors which could be drawn luxuriously in and out of one's mouth and lasted indefinitely, or taffy-on-a-stick. We squabbled constantly but found it inconvenient to stay mad for long as we really preferred playing together to nursing our grievances separately. Sarah was apt to be the peacemaker and would call me over to the "bare spot" and say piously: "Kitty, don't let's let the sun go down on our wrath"—(we had a superstitious feeling that something sinister would happen if we did)—and I, with equal sanctimoniousness, would forgive her, although I was more often than not in the wrong.

On rainy days we had to play indoors, making elaborate preparations which involved upsetting some room completely;



I suspect each mother was glad when we chose the other house to play in.

“The Griffins’ ” had many of the characteristics of our old house; a pleasant mixture of old and new, with some fine pieces of 18th and early 19th Century furniture. It faced up street with a long flagged walk and lawns in the foreground. We used to tease Augusta and Sarah about their far-sightedness, gained from much looking up the street from the porch. They could recognize people at an incredible distance.

There was an attic out of which delightful bits of costume came for our many theatrical ventures. Lyme attics have probably been thoroughly rifled by this time, but they seemed inexhaustible treasure-houses in our early days.

When Arthur and Helen were children they, too, enjoyed the Griffins’ as a playground, and one spring, when she was nine or ten, Helen made a long visit at Cousin Gertrude’s. Her letters home were delightful. After describing the way she spent her days, feeding the chickens, hunting eggs, etc., she moralized: “I wouldn’t like to be a chicken, just pecking around all day and laying eggs.”

Cousin Gertrude is a gentle and tranquil memory, a home-loving and rather shy woman, quietly active in her house, in the church and in constant neighborly kindnesses; and adored by her children. She was very patient with the constant messes and strewings of the front yard, the porch, the summer house, that was the accompaniment of our activities. I can hear her: "Now, little girls, you must begin to pick up"—a knell of doom sounding the inevitable ending of another absorbing day.

Dr. Griffin died when I was almost a child. I can remember how big he was—six feet three, I should guess—and what a reassuring warmth he brought with him when he came to minister to our various ailments.

Once, when I was very small, Will fell out of the horse chestnut tree in front of the house and gave us a dreadful scare. He was purple in the face and couldn't get his breath for an appallingly long time. I flew across the green shrieking for Dr. Griffin—it was lucky for us that he lived next door and was at home. He was a welcome and genial visitor wherever his work called him and was greatly mourned after

his death.

Across the street from us, and looking toward the green, was the McCurdy house and in it lived Judge Charles Johnson McCurdy and his housekeeper, Miss Therèse Pachner, who had come back with him and his daughter, Cousin Evelyn, when they returned from a long stay in Vienna. Judge McCurdy was, in 1851 and '52, Chargé d'Affaires for the United States, the highest representative which this country at that time sent to Austria. He later became Associate Justice of the Connecticut Supreme Court and held other public offices, being sent in 1861 to the Peace Congress in Washington. He was the son of Squire Richard McCurdy.

We remember him as an urbane old gentleman, dignified and courtly when the occasion required it, with a real "flair" for diplomacy; mellow and somewhat ironical in his attitude toward life and in particular toward his daughter, who always entertained him, although she was sometimes too much for him. He had a quick tongue when the company inspired him and among his wide circle of friends, within and beyond the borders of the State, he





THE MCCURDY HOUSE





was known as one of the wittiest, as well as one of the most distinguished members of the Bar.

He lived to be nearly one hundred and had an ambition to pass that mark. At a dinner given in his honor, a toast was offered: "To Judge McCurdy—may he live to be a hundred!"—"Why limit me, gentlemen—why limit me?"

His mind was clear almost to the last, but, when he felt himself to be really failing, he shut himself away from his friends. His pride could not endure to have them see the change.

Cousin Evelyn wrote of him, in "Family Histories": "A hereditary moderation seems to have calmed his pulses and saved him from the feverish restlessness and ambition which wear out the lives of many public men." Of their personal relationship, she speaks delightfully: "He made her (Cousin E.) conversant with his legal affairs and has shared with her his political and intellectual interests through life. They were not only fond of each other but they interested each other—two states of feeling not always united."

In his later years he retired from the Bench and devoted himself to his farms

and his books. His land ran along the south side of the old Post Road, across Duck River, and on the north side took in great stretches of pasture on the Meeting House Hills and reached eastward far into the woods.

Judge McCurdy was very proud of a vein of pinkish red granite that ran through his property and wished his monument to be built of it. He never quarried it in any quantity because he did not want to tear up his land. One day, Cousin Anna Chadwick, who lived next door, said playfully—"When are you going to build me a monument with your granite—?" "Whenever you will get under it, Cousin Anna."

She was in her third widowhood and paid marked attention to the Judge, much to his delight. She would ply him with pies and delicacies which she passed across the fence—Cousin Evelyn always said of her: "Yes—your Cousin Anna married three times and would have again, *had the opportunity offered*,"—the opportunity, of course, being Judge McCurdy, who was much too comfortable and self-sufficient to offer.

He drove about his wide farm lands and

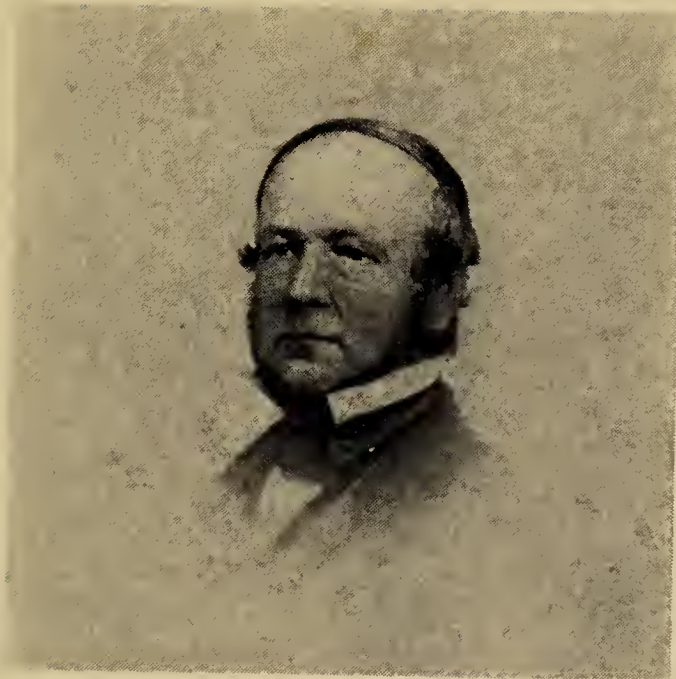
through the town, wearing a high, furry gray beaver, which he would touch with one finger when he passed an acquaintance. He owned a piece of hilly property to the west of Rogers Lake which he called his Adirondacks. There he kept one herd of cows and often drove up to inspect them or bring them down to pastures nearer home. Will and Charlie had cause to remember this herd. One day, the Judge had caught the boys hidden behind a fence in his garden, eating one of his melons. They were paralyzed with terror, but he didn't say much to them at the time. A few days later, he drove past them on the street, then called back and asked if they wanted to go with him to the lake to get the cows. Conscious of guilt, they didn't dare refuse. When the Judge had driven the herd out of their "Adirondack" pasture and headed them homewards, he climbed into his wagon, told the boys to take good care of the cows and drove off, grinning with satisfaction. Will and Charlie walked the three miles home behind those cows burning with rage and feeling that the eyes of the world were upon them; but they had to admit that the Judge had scored.



We loved to go to his house—partly because he was so entertaining and partly because good “Miss Therèse” made, with her own hands, a particularly delicious kind of sponge cake, and we were generally sure of getting a piece. There were quantities of grapes, too, and other fruit. I remember running in one day when I was a very small girl and flinging myself on his neck—then I noticed that he had a caller, a gaunt old gentleman, who said odiously: “Won’t you give me a kiss, too, little girl?” I refused—and after he had gone, Judge McCurdy, with much amusement, asked—“Why wouldn’t you kiss that gentleman? You always kiss me.” “But you are nice to kiss.” And he was—his skin was very fresh and smooth, his color bright and he had twinkling eyes.

He liked an open fire and had one burning summer as well as winter in the central living room with the southern exposure, where he used to sit. There were parlors either side of the front hall—then, this living room, with the dining room opening on one side and, back of it, his office and bedroom.

Cousin Evelyn always referred to this as the “Washington” room and the big



JUDGE CHARLES J. McCURDY



COUSIN EVELYN  
(Mrs. Edward E. Salisbury)



four-poster as the Washington bed. When cross-questioned, she had to admit that she arrived at this by a process of deduction. Washington was known to have passed through Lyme on a certain date on his way to New Haven. She argued that of course he would have to spend one night on the way, that he would naturally choose Lyme as the stopping point—what town could compare for charm?—and, equally, of course, Squire McCurdy would be the person to entertain him—and having followed her that far, it was obvious to you that he would have been put in the best bedroom with the four-post bed.

We were in the habit of referring facetiously to the “Washington bed”—but, to the confusion of all skeptics she discovered, years later, some old journals which showed that he did pass through Lyme, he did spend the night here and stayed at Squire McCurdy’s! After such proof, why question the room and the bed?

The kitchen and offices were in a wing running back to the East. Upstairs, the house wound around most intricately. After Judge McCurdy’s death, we lived there the summer our new house was being built. Cousin Evelyn—always a law



to herself—had elected years before to live in a cottage nearby, so the old house was empty.

It was great fun to be there. We felt it to be a sacred trust and Cousin Evelyn did nothing to lessen the feeling. She impressed on us its extreme historical importance and we quite recognized that the shades of Washington and Lafayette (he, too, had visited there) were hovering over us.

Among the sacred possessions which went along with the house that summer were seven cats, ranging in social importance from the arrogant members of Cousin Evelyn's family of maltese grays (always with white markings) to poor relations of the barn variety. They greatly resented our presence although we fed them quite humbly and tried not to interfere with their usual routine.

Cousin Evelyn's husband, Professor Salisbury, was a courteous and formal old gentleman, who treated her very much as we did the cats. They were devoted to each other but he, like Judge McCurdy, gave her her head and pursued his scholarly existence as unobtrusively as possible.

When we had been in the house a week

or so, we called one evening on Cousin Evelyn and “her Professor” (Aunt Jane’s expression). While Cousin E. entertained Mother and Father, I talked with Mr. Salisbury. When conversation was brisk on the other side of the room, he said softly —“I hope—I trust that you will be very good to those cats at the old house”—I assured him that we would—“I hope they may be contented to remain with you. I am not—er—not so fond of cats as your Cousin Evelyn is—”

He was a distinguished Sanskrit scholar and Professor of Oriental Languages at Yale; he had a fine, ascetic profile with a Roman nose, high forehead, a long upper lip and a straight line of mouth—the whole mask suggesting the mummy of Rameses which had been discovered about that time.

He wore, with a certain melancholy style, a soft black felt hat and black broadcloth cape—a striking figure as he paced the Lyme street, absorbed in his own thoughts and recognizing you, if you met him, with a little start of surprise.

But, to come to Cousin Evelyn, herself—Cousin Evelyn! Who can really put her on paper? She was so much a part of

Lyme and of our lives, a personality of such flavor and distinction, that her death, when she was over ninety, seemed almost incredible.

In winter, she and Mr. Salisbury lived in New Haven in a solemn Greek temple of a mansion on Church Street, but they spent long summers in Lyme in the house near her father's which she had named "Salisbury" and painted a sort of crushed strawberry pink, following her quite personal—and confident—taste. She was sure of her judgment in that as in everything else. Had not Professor Salisbury once written a book called "Principles of Domestic Taste?" and had she not had the advantage of years of residence and travel abroad? She was a young woman when they went to Vienna and had received such strong impressions from the society of the Austria of that day that it had "formed" her ideas in every respect: dress, manners, art, houses. When she came back to live in Lyme, it was not strange that she should feel that she brought a wider viewpoint to the little town. Her attitude in later years was that of the dowager countess toward a small English community—the only difficulty being that Lyme peo-



ple, also keenly conscious of a substantial ancestry and culture, did not see themselves in the role of the humble villagers; so Cousin Evelyn's life was a succession of frustrations, accepted usually with good nature and with not the slightest disturbance of her secure sense of superiority. She would speak her mind to you, and then say—"Well, I have told you what I think—if you don't believe me, I wash my hands of you!"

She strikingly resembled Queen Victoria and, whether consciously or not, dressed the part to perfection. Her silk costumes made for years by a well disciplined New Haven dressmaker, were full in the skirt with, generally, an overskirt and many ruffles, and a basque, tight fitting and buttoning down the front. She always wore a real lace collar or barb, pinned with some old-fashioned brooch—and when she was really "dressed" wore her garnet or diamond "set."

There was always a little shawl or scarf about her shoulders, rings on her very pretty and expressive hands and a footstool under her feet, as she received you, seated in her especial arm chair.

Her face was oval and in her youth she



had been extremely pretty, with finely chiselled features, blue-gray eyes and delicate skin. She wore her hair parted, framing her forehead with a wavy line, and very carefully dressed. It was never entirely white, and was, I suppose, considerably supplemented by art as she grew older.

Her voice was clear, rather high, and her enunciation crisp. She always made her points carry, and she never hesitated to be pointed. She had a command of forceful English, entirely un-modernized. She rounded her sentences and used no short cuts, but she never was ponderous!

Cousin Evelyn had the material for volumes of memoirs stored in her mind if she had chosen to write them. She turned her interest instead to genealogy and to her collections of old china and furniture. The five great volumes of Family Histories and Genealogies, which most of us are familiar with—at least externally—are the repository of her genealogical studies. Her fine collection of china, most of it now on exhibition in the upper room of the Lyme Library, testifies to her diligence as a collector. The furniture has gone in several directions.

If any of you unregenerate members of the younger generation of this family have not read Cousin Evelyn's monograph on her father, with its entrancing descriptions of her presentation at the English court and her experiences in Vienna, you have missed a unique chapter of family history. The five volumes are heavy and formidable, but not so Cousin Evelyn's pen!

The New Haven house must have been built between 1830 and 1840. There were parlors opening from each other, heavy carpets and marble busts on pedestals, mostly family portraits. It was filled, too, with books and pictures—principally of the Munich or Düsseldorf schools, collected by Judge McCurdy during his residence abroad, with a few copies in oils of Italian Madonnas or other old masters. Cousin Evelyn always said of his taste in pictures: "My father had an eye—he certainly had an eye." There were portraits in oil and miniatures; much miscellaneous bric-a-brac and, of course, the collection of china which filled the dining room and scattered through the house.

The house, as well as Cousin Evelyn, strongly suggested Queen Victoria. It

was restful in its dignified complacency and absence of decorative effort, its sense of having been arrested at the period of greatest congeniality to its owners and preserved complete and undisturbed by changing fashion.

But, you must not think that Cousin Evelyn was "arrested" in her development or that she lived in the past; far, far from it! She was incessantly active, objective, interested in people and quite unintellectual, so far as the world of ideas was concerned. She read a great deal on her own lines and knew exactly what she thought on every subject that occupied her attention.

She always set great value on education and helped many young men through college or professional schools. She was generously kind in countless directions, and was full of plans for the good of Lyme. They were not always practical plans and they usually found their point of departure in her own active mind (which saw the world as she wanted to see it) rather than in the actual needs of the town. She was often opposed in these plans by other leaders in the community and occasionally war raged; a war of vigorous personalities,



each sure of being in the right.

Sometimes Father and Cousin Evelyn collided and life was difficult for us all at those times. I remember when she took down the nice old picket fence that enclosed the McCurdy house and substituted a gas pipe contraption instead. Father took intense exception to this and declared he could not live and look out every day at that fence. He sent a formal expression of his opinion to Cousin Evelyn and she replied in writing and with obvious force, that the fence was hers. Papa was entirely unshaken in his conviction of being right and much diplomatic exchange of messengers and notes ensued. Cousin Evelyn, of course, continued to build the fence to suit herself and Father had to swallow his feelings.

Another of these strong personalities was General Joseph Perkins, a very charming and witty man, with a large following in town affairs. He and Cousin Evelyn rarely agreed and in moments of great irritation, she would say—"You know Joe Perkins *is* the devil." Sometimes, Father and she would line up together in a town matter and at those times they felt warmly toward each other. They



would exchange compliments: "You are an extremely young looking man for your years, Mr. Ludington"—"Mrs. Salisbury, you don't look a day older than you did when I first met you."

Toward the end of their lives, General Perkins decided that he wanted to make peace with Cousin Evelyn. So he got out his frock coat, put a flower in his buttonhole and went to call, on one of her "Wednesdays." She received him, seated, with no expression of surprise, except to say, "Cousin Joe, it is a good many years since you last came to see me." After a few words, he passed on into the dining room and the ice was broken. The real reconciliation, however, came a few weeks later. The railroad wished to buy property from Cousin Evelyn for a station and she made many difficulties about terms. The commissioners consulted General Perkins in the matter and a conference was arranged at her house. As they sat around the room, helplessly stalled and wondering what move to make next, she said in an audible aside—"Joe Perkins, you have a remarkably small foot for a man." This was *her* olive branch—I am not sure, however, that they never went to

war again.

She generally drove about the town in a kind of barouche, wearing a shade hat with an ostrich feather in the style of 1850. Her coachman of those days was as much of a character as she, and almost as firm. When she asked him, once, to drive her on Sunday, he said: "Mrs. Salisbury, I have an immortal soul to save as well as you." A slight adjustment of wages, however, got around this difficulty. When she left him standing outside the shops in New Haven on hot days, she would give him her parasol to hold over his head.

She had been told that she did not take enough exercise, so on her afternoon drives in East Rock Park, she used to get out and follow the carriage at a dog trot, holding a curtain rope fastened to the springs behind while the horses proceeded at a walk. Strangers may have stared but New Haven people were accustomed to all Cousin Evelyn's manifestations of personality.

In Lyme, she used a tricycle, which was gently propelled from behind by her coachman while she worked the pedals in front. Her secretary-companion generally walked at her side, and often, her

adopted son, Professor McCurdy. This caravan would wind its way slowly along the street, stopping while Cousin Evelyn carried on long conversations with friends. Sometimes she would lift her skirt and make you feel how firm her muscles were.

When she could be persuaded to delve in her past, especially her memories of Austria, she was endlessly entertaining. I remember one Thanksgiving Day, she dined with us—she was about ninety then—and fell into a particularly happy vein of reminiscence. Emperor Francis Joseph was a young man when Judge McCurdy and she were in Vienna and the court was brilliant, although it was a very disturbed period in Europe. She had to act as hostess for her father—her mother had died years before—and this and her close companionship with him gave her unusual opportunities to share the interesting contacts and exciting incidents of that troubled time.

She told us stories of her father's efforts on behalf of political prisoners or "suspects" of other nationalities beside his own—and of his first task on reaching Vienna, which was to liberate Charles Loring Brace, a young American friend



who had been thrown into a Hungarian prison.

We always suspected Cousin Evelyn of a romantic interest in him. He sometimes came to see her and her father in Lyme, but nothing matrimonial ensued and he later married an Irish lady whom he met on his European wanderings.

Lyme took an interest in his visits and I believe he was one of the first to appear here in the new fashion of whiskers. Aunt Jane used to repeat some doggerel that one of the cousins made up about "Evelyn's Whiskerando Brace, Who wears his hair all over his face."

Cousin Evelyn described her friendship with the Archduchess Maria Dorothea (a Protestant who was somewhat under political suspicion) and her tall, shy young daughter who later was the unhappy wife of King Leopold of Belgium. Cousin Evelyn always wore a ruby ring given to her by the poor mother.

She gave us bits, vividly told, such as watching from the upper window of a country inn, two gorgeous young officers come dashing up in a coach with a suite on horseback;—some minor royalties on their way to Vienna. They looked up, caught



sight of her in the window, bowed and kissed their hands.

Vienna was still a feudal walled city, and probably at its gayest period. She described Strauss' band playing in the public gardens. The constant sound of music in the air, the medley of uniforms and costumes of all the nationalities which made up the Empire—"Slavic peoples in their national dress, Hungarian shepherds with sheepskin coats, religious processions of Armenians—and the aristocrats driving in the Prater"—she brought it alive before our eyes, after sixty years. This was 1914, when the gay Vienna was approaching its end.

You can read it all in her "Family Histories," but, alas, you cannot see that majestic little figure nor hear her characteristic voice and inflection, so much the product of the world she was describing, so indescribably different from the "note" of the present day.

She was no critic of that world—she accepted and admired it with a snobbery so unquestioning in its sense of "belonging" that it was almost magnificent. She had the style that comes from a complete and concentrated personality with no inner

misgivings. Troubles she had, through her long life, but they never came from self-distrust.

People either liked Cousin Evelyn or disliked her. We knew her so well in Lyme that we probably failed to appreciate her distinction. I know that it was only toward the end of her life that I came to see her in a detached way, partly through the eyes of others who were not as used to her as we were.

I was very fond of her and have missed her since her death. I am afraid that she had much loneliness in her later years although she was surrounded with care and attention and took great pleasure and satisfaction in the scientific achievements of Dr. McCurdy, who was like a son to her. But, I believe it is true that the warmest and most satisfying companionship of her life was with her father. They understood each other—or, at least, he understood her and she adored him—and the tie of blood was always to her stronger than any other.

She added a rich chapter to the record of Lyme;—not the least distinguished figure in a history full of colorful and sometimes eminent lives. Her father was more liked, and far more effective in ac-

tion—but he filled no bigger place in the crowded canvass of Lyme characters.

## V. SOME OTHER LYME RECOLLECTIONS

IT cannot be entirely local vanity that gave Lyme people the conviction that their village was "different." Too many others with no reason for prejudice have thought so too.

The town seems to have had an unusual proportion of families of education and breeding. In fact, class feeling here was stronger than in many New England towns, carrying down from English days and bringing with it certain unfortunate and disturbing by-products to the community. But Lyme was unquestionably rich in its men and women. Cousin Evelyn may have glorified her Lyme pictures in "Family Histories" and embellished them with a too active imagination, but when all due allowance is made, the record is a good one; the little town has sent out into the world a quite disproportionate contribution of brains and ability. Like many another New England countryside, it has been impoverished in its own blood by the infusions which it supplied to the large cities, the pioneer states of the middle west



or the wars that took some of its best. If we had been able to keep our own, if Lyme had given sufficient scope for their energies, many of the houses which have changed hands over and over might still be known by the old names.

I shall not attempt either a history of the town nor an enumeration of its eminent citizens; I simply want to put down some chance memories of people which have stuck in my mind when much more important things were forgotten. The true history of Lyme should be a composite, each of its families supplying a chapter until the life of the whole emerged, as seen from the windows of half a hundred old houses.

My earliest recollections, outside the house and the green, are naturally of the church and of long services, not as unpleasant to me as they are traditionally supposed to be to children. If I did not find sufficient entertainment in listening to the sermon, I could always let my mind wander in pleasant fields of the imagination. This was rather stimulated, in fact, by the familiar readings, the hymns heard over and over again, the voice of the minister saying words to which I paid almost



THE CHURCH  
(Two views)





no attention. I used to slip down on the floor of the pew, if I got too tired, and Aunt Jane would give me fennel seed to nibble. Mother had a trick of knotting her handkerchief into a rabbit, if we grew wriggley and once I made the rabbit jump along the back of the pew and then was covered with confusion when I met the shocked eyes of the people behind us. We always sat far up in front.

The collection was taken up by the deacons—Deacon Beckwith (our friend of the Post Office) and Deacon Rowland; good men with gentle faces, set in expressions of studious decorum. There was a conventional church face in those days and a subdued cordiality as you greeted people going down the aisle, which eased up into friendly gossip on the church steps.

In spite of the orderliness and propriety of the services, however, "incidents" occasionally happened to delight the children. A wasp would fasten his attentions on the minister, crawling slowly along the pulpit and suddenly appearing on the white paper of the big Bible—or a cat or dog would stray in and make us giggle. Once a particularly charming gray kitten climbed to the top of an empty pew in



front and then jumped to the next pew, hanging precariously onto the slippery mahogany rim along the top of the seat. In the evening service there were June bugs and always the chance of a bat.

People created diversions occasionally. Miss Mariette Lay was an eccentric lady, given to rather exuberant clothes and with a coquettish set of curls attached to the brim of her bonnet. When the hat was not quite straight, the effect was indescribably rakish. She was absent-minded and one day she spoke out loud. This horrified her and she said, a little louder, "Why, I spoke right out in church—why, I'm going right on speaking"—until her family calmed her. She and her sister were both fond of color and Cousin Augusta used to murmur:

"Who are these in bright array?  
Mariette and Aurelia Lay."

Aunt Jane, as I have said earlier, often provided entertainment: Cousin Evelyn's entry was generally impressive, and as her pew was on a line with ours, she would lean over and ask Mother some sibilant question, about the visiting minister or the health of the family. Then, there was

Mrs. Shadrach Sill, grim faced and blunt, who never hesitated to comment audibly. One day, an Armenian was given the pulpit to appeal for help for his always stricken people. The minister introduced him as "Mr. Dalmatian, a brother from far off Armenia." "*What* did he say his name was? Mr. *Damnation!*" said Mrs. Sill, aloud.

There are traditions of still more exciting happenings in earlier days. Back of the pulpit stood an old horsehair sofa, and once when three visiting divines were seated on it, for some important occasion, the seat came down and three pairs of legs waved above the pulpit. But we were not privileged to see that—it was before our day.

Missionaries came from time to time, often with extremely interesting tales of foreign parts. We liked them. Then, there were temperance speakers and the local minister was glad to yield his pulpit and, perhaps, to be spared the preparation of a sermon.

The first temperance movement that I remember was when I was about fourteen, and a man who called himself "Temperance Toiler Speer" held a week of meet-

ings in the Town Hall. He made up a choir of the young people of the town—mostly young women—and we sang Moody and Sankey hymns on the platform every night. When things were not lively enough to suit him, he would turn to us and say, “Whoop it up, beloved!”

The Saturday night service was supposed to gather in the sheaves and after particularly energetic exhortation he threw the meeting open and called on the audience to come up and sign the pledge. I well remember the awkward silence that followed—a long pause in which the scattered audience looked from side to side and wished they were at home.

Finally, up from the back there walked the most blameless young man of the town, the son of a former deacon, and heroically signed. A friend of his, sitting beside us on the platform, whispered—“Now, I call that gilding the lily.”

Others followed and I believe there were a good number of signers. I am afraid the Griffins and I were held back by the memory of the Greening apples in our orchard and the cider press in their barn. At any rate, we did not sign.

A memory, which is still vivid, is of an-



other temperance orator who spoke one Sunday night in the church and illustrated his talk with stereopticon pictures showing the evils of drink. As a climax, he told us of a visit he made, after many years' absence, to his home town in New England, which had had a devastating fire, due to some drunken carelessness. He said dramatically: "Yes, I went back to visit my old home and *this* is what I saw," and clicked his signal to the man who operated the lantern from the gallery. On the screen appeared to our startled eyes a picture of a baptism in the River Jordan with exceedingly unclothed and exotic figures. Confusion ensued until Lynn or Salem, Massachusetts, came on as intended.

We always turned out for occasions of this kind in the hope of excitement.

The Lyme church, on the whole, has been exceedingly fortunate in its ministers and for all of us, who were brought up in it, it is "The Church," the symbol of a common religious tradition. We have often had very beautiful musical services, although in my early childhood, the choir, while loyal, was entirely individualistic and followed each his, or her, own sweet will, held heroically together by "Miss Lou"



Griswold, at the organ. Miss Bradbury sang stridently and faithfully for at least thirty years. Mr. Henry Noyes' voice was always quite distinguishable from the rest, setting his own time. Once in a while, a minister would change the regular tune of the hymn, unexpectedly, and the new one might not be in the right metre. The result was painfully embarrassing to the congregation.

We once had a minister who was a protégé of Cousin Evelyn's and a very learned man; he had been valedictorian of his class at Yale. General Perkins, who never missed the "opening" so to speak, of a new performer in the pulpit, and always gave his verdict on the sermon to interested listeners after service, said of him—"There are wells and wells of dullness in that man." Perhaps the fact that Cousin Evelyn favored him added a little zest to the pronouncement.

As time went on, Cousin Evelyn felt that her man was not making the impression on the town that his learning entitled him to, so she told him: "Preach more scholarly sermons — preach over their heads. They won't understand it but they will like it." So the next Sunday, his ser-

mon began: "The nidification of the eagle on the face of the cliff postulates the existence of the nestlings." The two pews of Griffins and Ludingtons sat in concentrated attention and after church, we met and found that we could recite the sentence in chorus.

Aunt Harriet was full of stories and legends—it is a crime that no one ever took down her recollections. She knew the history of the town well and was proud of it but she did like a good story. It was from her that we used to hear about Deacon Reynold Marvin who courted Betty Lee—"Betty, the Lord appeared to me in a vision last night and said it was His will that I should marry you." "The Lord's will be done," said Betty. But apparently her father was not so sure about it, for the story ran that having waited some time for his consent, they published the banns in church, as follows:

"Reynold Marvin and Betty Lee  
Do intend to marry.  
Although her dad opposed be  
They will no longer tarry."

He was apparently not the same Reynold Marvin who was the "deacon,

aged 68," in the Lyme cemetery. Perhaps the latter was his son.

Aunt Harriet used to tell about one early minister whose dignity or feeling often got offended and when they were, he revenged himself on the congregation by sitting down and refusing to go on with the service. The deacons would come up and pacify him. One Sunday, he caught sight of his scapegrace son in the gallery wearing one of his old wigs. He stopped and glared, but to no effect. Finally he proceeded—then he felt a strong draft and saw that one of the windows was broken. This was too much and he sat firmly down. While the deacons were reasoning with him, the son arose, hurled the wig at the pulpit and said: "Take your wig and stop the window." Aunt Harriet always vouched for the truth of this lawless tale.

People must have been more blunt and pointed in their speech in earlier days. The angles of their personalities were not rubbed off by convention; they spoke their minds in expressive English. Even now they are not given to superlatives and are economical in words. The girls of the Boxwood School caused a veritable sensation one day by running in a squad down the



street, clothed in bloomers. Cousin Sarah was one of a group on the steps of Caulkins' store, as the squad came by. There was a shocked silence and everyone waited for Mr. Caulkins to give adequate expression to their horror. Finally he spoke: "Now, ain't that too bad"—and everyone was satisfied. This was in the best Lyme tradition.

Of course, expletives were also a tradition and we had many artists in profanity. "Pard" Rose, conducting his oxen through the street, had a kind of chant, quite personal to himself, which you could hear afar off.

I spent a good deal of time in the Post Office, in my childhood, and in the corner store, and I suppose I heard constant profanity—but I don't remember being shocked, and I know there was nothing vulgar or gross in the talk I heard. The town was full of "characters," and their remarks were passed around. There were several town "Malaprops" but they were mostly men. There was Sam Monroe, whose comments on political matters were treasured. "Those fellows in Congress talk a lot—they just do it to immoralize themselves in the Congressional Record." He always spoke of the "persquisites" of



office. He was nothing if not elegant in his English. Old Bill Appleby was always more dignified when he was drunk and we children would gather around him as he sat propped against a tree and discoursed impressively. There was Mat Rowland, a disreputable ne'er-do-well, whose drudging, patient wife supported him for years, and after she finally divorced him, took him back when he dressed up and came to see her, because "she had forgotten he was so handsome." He worked occasionally and had a way of buying up forlorn old horses and wagons. With one of these turnouts he would drive his wife up to her work in the town (she cleaned and washed for many families) and he always charged her fare for these trips. But she kept on working for him till she died.

Why do these things stick in my mind? I suppose I heard them discussed and laughed over and children love to hear older people's jokes. Volumes could be filled with our memories of the town's characters, while its serious activities went almost unrecorded. I do not know whether the sense of the ludicrous was more marked in Lyme than in other New England

towns, but it is true that the stories of the past have come down to us preserved, as it were, in a kind of salty brine of humor. Anti-Puritans would tell us that it was the natural reaction of suffering human nature against undue repression. I am inclined to think, rather, that the humor got its tang because it was the froth thrown up by the strong brew of vigorous minds and that it gained quality by its very contrast with their seriousness.

They were given to rhyming. Many of the stories preserve jingles and doggerel. There was an old character called Seth Miner, who lived in the woods north of the Meeting House Hills. He used to turn up at people's houses and ask for a drink or a bite to eat and they would make him do a "poem" in payment. The story runs that he called at Sam Johnson's house one night and Mrs. Johnson was rather reluctant to give him the cider he begged. She temporized by asking for a poem first, and he began:

"The children of Israel asked for bread  
And the Lord he gave 'em manna...."

Then she went to get his cider but brought the glass back half full—so he finished:

“Old Sam Johnson wanted a wife  
And the Devil gave him Hannah.”

This is characteristic Lyme folklore which Aunt Harriet was full of. I am exercising great restraint not to go on for hours more—but perhaps you wouldn't read it, if I did.

I could take you on walks to all our favorite spots—many of them alas, so overgrown nowadays that we can hardly find them. The Jumping Rocks, Land's End, Flying Point, The Stone House, which you reached from the Whippoorwill Road, Lover's Lane—any one of them brings up the smell of the woods, sweet fern, pennyroyal, bay, the sound of crows cawing, and other smaller birds. The very names bear testimony that our forbears could make pictures with words and were rich in imagination. Take some other names: Hard Scrabble Hill, The Devil's Hopyard, Johnny Cake Hill, Blood Street, “Between the Rivers,” Tantummaheag, “Bucky Brook,”—so called because the buckeyes, a popular fish, are found there at certain times. What a contrast to the “Maplewoods” and “Laurel Lanes” and “Shady Lawns” and “Elm Streets”



of a more insipid day.

Lyme amused itself in our young days, sometimes royally. I remember a town picnic for Chief Justice Waite—the pride of the village,—when he came back one summer. (He was born in Lyme and spent many summers here). There were games—a greased pig, a greased pole, potato races, etc., and a clam bake, and every man, woman and child turned out for it.

There were dances in the Town Hall as far back as I can remember and probably much further. We boasted several fiddlers, but Barney Bump was the most famous. He is still alive and “called out” the figures at a dance not long ago.

We used to have many plays and theatricals, making costumes and scenery ourselves, and needing nothing but local talent, in which the town was rich. And we had paper chases on foot or horseback, picnics, sailing and fishing, and in the long Fall evenings, popcorn and apples around the open fire with an accompaniment of ghost stories read by the light of a single candle. Will Brown, who visited us often as a boy, was particularly brilliant in the role of raconteur or reader. He could send shivers down the most cynical back with



Poe's tales or others which we found in the old volumes of Harper's.

I sit by the fire and these memories come crowding into my mind—trivial or interesting? It is hard for me to judge, because they have such flavor and reality for me. I am leaving out far more than I am putting in, for I am afraid to give you a surfeit. I have not forgotten the other old friends and the familiar places which have been left out. A village like Lyme teaches one the meaning of "neighbors." People in a small place may sometimes have sharp tongues or an undue love of a dramatic story; but wait till you are in trouble! When the church burned and our house kept catching fire, the population of the village arrived in about ten minutes and while the young men were risking their lives on the hot smoking roof, the older ones were carrying out the contents of our house and laying the family possessions carefully on the lawn or the green. Almost nothing was broken or damaged, except by water or the burning shingles which the wind blew in our direction.

I remember seeing Deacon Rowland, then an old man, dragging the heavily packed trunk of one of our maids down the

back stairs. His face was set and grim and I did not stop to surmise what were the words that he was saying under his breath.

The church caught fire in the late evening and burned most of the night. The old spire with its heavy bell stood upright with the flames mounting around it until the clock slowly struck twelve times, and then fell with an awful crash. A semi-circle of silent people stood on the green watching the familiar and sacred landmark go. Many were sobbing and all were still, as if at service.

They had worshipped there all their lives, they had been married there and brought their children for baptism and from there their dead had been carried to the grave, or at least, had passed by the church to the accompaniment of the tolling bell, which told us that another neighbor had gone and that we were all to join in sorrow.

A friend wrote of Grandfather Noyes' funeral, passing her home:

“Death passed by my door.

I was looking as he went

To my neighbor's—He could never say

Too soon Death was sent.

“He bowed his head and died,  
Gently, without pain to grieve  
The friends who only cried  
Because he was relieved.”

The burning of the old church seems to date the passing of a period, the closing of one volume of Lyme's story. The town rose magnificently to the crisis and before dawn, that night, a group had met and under the fine leadership of the minister, Mr. Chapman, had decided to rebuild and had formed their committee.

The following Sunday we gathered on the green for a memorial service to meet the need that all felt for some expression of our grief. Dr. Benjamin Bacon, a former pastor, spoke—then Mr. Du Mond voiced the sorrow of the artists for the loss of so much beauty,—then Judge Walter Noyes, of Lyme blood, upbringing, and life-long residence, spoke for the town. His hand trembled, he spoke slowly and with difficulty although he was a distinguished member of the Bar; but he satisfied us and we went home eased and comforted.

Lyme should never forget the generosity and the sacrifices that went into the re-

building of the church. People gave far beyond their means; men, who had never before thought of a gift above a ten dollar bill, gave \$1,000. Members of the other churches forgot sectarianism and joined in liberally. The Catholics of the town contributed to the church clock, saying that they all benefited by it.

The new church was finally built, the burned elms were replaced. We planted arbor vitae on either side of the portico to make it look as familiar as possible. But it still seemed strange, a lifeless shell, until the new bell, into which had gone some of the old metal, was put in place. One day an expert came to set it and connect it with the clock works—and suddenly it spoke. I am sure that all who heard it had the same thought—the old voice was re-embodied, the wordless message had been picked up and was being passed on—to how many generations more, who can tell?

















